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THE ORIGINS OF RELIGION

AND OTHER ESSAYS



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THE ORIGINS OF RELIGION

AND OTHER ESSAYS

BY

ANDREW LANG, M.A.

HON. FELLOW OF MERTON COLLEGE
OXFORD

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INTRODUCTION

THE first eight Essays in this R.P.A. Cheap Reprint form the larger part of a book¹ which was first published twenty-four years ago, and in these years much has been added to our knowledge of some of the problems with which they deal. Mr. Howitt has published wide investigations of the society of the Australian aborigines, writing mainly in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*. Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, in their *Native Races of Central Australia*,² *Northern Tribes of Central Australia* (1904), and *Native Tribes of South East Australia* (1904), have given us a masterly treatise on the central tribes among whom they sojourned. Mrs. Langloh Parker has done similar work for *The Euahlayi Tribe*. In America, the Bureau of Ethnology has continued to produce valuable volumes yearly; while Mr. Haddon with a Cambridge party has explored the islands between Australia and New Guinea, and the regretted Miss Kingsley has described the manners and customs of Western Africa. In addition to these and many other works of "field naturalists" among savage races, the second edition of Mr. J. G. Frazer's *Golden Bough* contains an unrivalled collection of materials derived from all sources.

As far as concerns the essays, that on "The Bull-Roarer" may be enriched by the discovery that palæolithic man, in Europe, had *pendeloques* exactly in the shape, and decorated with the patterns, of bull-roarers, or *churinga*, as described among the natives of Central Australia by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen. Anyone who compares a bone amulet of the Saint Marcel cave, published by the Abbé Breuil, with those in the book of Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, must observe that the Australian and palæolithic objects are identical.³ As the noise of the bull-roarer, in Australia and elsewhere, when produced at the mysteries, is taken to be that of a supernormal Being who directs the proceedings, it may be provisionally inferred that palæolithic man entertained similar religious ideas, while neolithic man, in the Baltic provinces, has left bull-roarers, or amulets of that shape, in amber.

For the survival of the bull-roarer as a "thunder-spell" in Scotland, Mr. Haddon's *The Study of Man* (pp. 277-82) may be consulted; the

¹ *Custom and Myth*.

² Cf. *L'Anthropologie*, vol. xiii., p. 152, fig. 4a. ³ Macmillan, London, 1899. See, too, Mr. Cook, in the same periodical, vol. xiv., pp. 657, 658.

essay shows every stage in the religious and magical development of this ancient instrument : which may represent a god, or may sink to the estate of a mere toy. I was, I think, the first to observe that the thing existed in the far away and dateless age of palæolithic man.

With regard to the essay on "Apollo and the Mouse," it is to be remembered that animals acquire sacredness in religion in many ways besides what they may inherit from totemism. The works of Mr. J. G. Frazer show that, among agricultural peoples, the "Corn Spirit" is recognised in a vast number of animal forms, which are prominent in agricultural magic and religion. Thus a sacred animal associated with a god, say the Pig with Demeter, is not necessarily a survival of a totem. That the Indo-European peoples were once totemic cannot be certainly proved, though many facts point in that direction. When we first meet them in history they have reached a point in civilisation at which we could not expect to discover more than faint and dubious totemic traces.

A correspondent, whom I am not free to name, makes the ingenious suggestion, as to Apollo Smintheus, that the ancients may have detected a connection between rats and the conveyance of the infection of plague, and may have associated both with Apollo and with Æsculapius. The Philistines, in 1 Samuel v. 6, had bubonic plague (emerods), and sent to Israel with the captured Ark golden images of the buboes, and of *mice* in our English version. Why mice? If they sent images of rats, they may have connected these animals with the spread of the pestilence. On the other hand, the vermin from which Apollo Smintheus took his name were not rats, but shrew-mice.

The essay on "The Divining Rod" may lead anyone who cares for the subject to study Professor Barrett's two large works about this kind of "automatism" in the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research. The Divining Rod is now so far rehabilitated that towns and colleges employ the services of the "dowser." In the essay on "The Art of Savages" probably too little is allowed for the tendency of representative art to "schematise" its designs into what seem mere geometrical patterns. It has been found, too, that, while the Australian tribes of the south use linear patterns only, those of the centre and north use curves, spirals, and concentric circles, a difference not easily to be explained. Mr. Haddon's *Evolution in Art* may be recommended to the student.

As concerns "The Midnight Axe," I have materials for a whole essay on this very curious topic. Mr. E. N. Brunett, of Hertford College, Oxford, in 1892 described to me his own experiences of "the mysterious sounds of chopping wood at night," in the isle of St. Helena. "Many times I have stood with others and listened as the *thud, thud*, of the axe came to our ears from a spot about 150 or 200 yards distant, the spot being bare of trees or bushes.....The whole thing was inexplicable."

Mr. Stephen Ponder adds the following explanation and myth :—

5th January, 1892.

DEAR SIR,—In reference to your note in this month's *Longman's* as to the "Midnight Axe," you may be interested to know that in the jungle of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula there is a bird which exactly reproduces the sound of an axe on wood. This is the long-tailed hornbill. I have often seen him perch on a high tree, strike five or six blows on the trunk with his immense bony helmet, and then give out a burst of yelling laughter that you can hear a mile off. The Malays call him "Tebang Mentuah," which means "feller of his mother-in-law." They say that he was once a man, who, being aggrieved by his relative, went by night and chopped away the posts of her house, so that it fell and killed her ; but before he had his laugh out (a very unusual performance for a Malay) he became a bird of this species. This does not, of course, explain the legends of Ceylon and Samoa, where hornbills do not exist ; but bird-noises at night are wonderfully deceptive.

From Madagascar the Rev. T. J. Fuller wrote : "I came here in June, 1895. The Mission House is built in a clearing in the belt of forest running along the coast, and quite close to the beach. It stands alone and at some distance from the other mission buildings in the same large, unenclosed compound. We lie quite outside the native village, and there is not a single hut for miles beyond in the direction of the forest. There is a Betsimisaraka cemetery, strongly palisaded or stockaded, about 100 yards to the north of my bedroom. Soon after we came here we were frequently disturbed, late into the night and long after retiring, by distinct sounds of trees being felled in the near neighbourhood of our bedroom. Even a town-bred person would not be likely to mistake the sound ; and I, who once lived in the Backwoods, am even less liable to be mistaken. The axe, as it bites into a tree, has an echo peculiar to itself. We sought an explanation in ordinary phenomena, and made inquiries, but to no purpose." I myself have found the "Midnight Axe" in County Sligo.

"Savage Spiritualism" and "Ancient Spiritualism" are taken from *Cock Lane and Common Sense*, and "Crystal Gazing" from *The Making of Religion*. The last essay is a new one, not hitherto published.

A. L.

May 1st, 1908.

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THE ORIGINS OF RELIGION

AND OTHER ESSAYS

I.

THE METHOD OF FOLKLORE

AFTER the heavy rain of a thunderstorm has washed the soil, it sometimes happens that a child, or a rustic, finds a wedge-shaped piece of metal or a few triangular flints in a field or near a road. There was no such piece of metal, there were no such flints, lying there yesterday, and the finder is puzzled about the origin of the objects on which he has lighted. He carries them home, and the village wisdom determines that the wedge-shaped piece of metal is a "thunder-bolt," or that the bits of flint are "elf-shots," the heads of fairy arrows. Such things are still treasured in remote nooks of England, Ireland, and Scotland, and the "thunder-bolt" is applied to cure certain maladies by its touch.

As for the fairy arrows, we know that even in ancient Etruria they were looked on as magical, for we sometimes see their points set, as amulets, in the gold of Etruscan necklaces. In Perugia the arrow-heads are still sold as charms. All educated people, of course, have long been aware that the metal wedge is a celt, or ancient bronze axe-head, and that it was not fairies, but the forgotten peoples of this island, who used the arrows with the tips of flint. Thunder is only so far connected with them that the heavy rains loosen the surface soil, and lay bare its long-hidden secrets.

There is a science, Archæology, which collects and compares the material relics

of old races, the axes and arrow-heads. There is a form of study, Folklore, which collects and compares the similar but immaterial relics of old races, the surviving superstitions and stories, the ideas which are in our time but not of it. Properly speaking, folklore is only concerned with the legends, customs, beliefs, of the Folk, of the people, of the classes which have least been altered by education, which have shared least in progress. But the student of folklore soon finds that these unprogressive classes retain many of the beliefs and ways of savages, just as the Hebridean people use spindle-whorls of stones, and bake clay pots without the aid of the wheel, like modern South Sea Islanders, or like their own prehistoric ancestors.¹ The student of folklore is thus led to examine the usages, myths, and ideas of savages, which are still retained, in rude enough shape, by the European peasantry. Lastly, he observes that a few similar customs and ideas survive in the most conservative elements of the life of educated peoples, in ritual, ceremonial, and religious traditions and myths. Though such remains are rare in England, we may note the custom of leading the dead soldier's horse behind his master to the grave, a relic of days when

¹ A study of the contemporary stone age in Scotland will be found in Mitchell's *Past and Present*.

the horse would have been sacrificed.¹ We may observe the persistence of the ceremony by which the monarch, at his coronation, takes his seat on the sacred stone of Scone. Not to speak here of our own religious traditions, the old vein of savage rite and belief is found very near the surface of ancient Greek religion. It wants but some stress of circumstance, something answering to the storm shower that reveals the flint arrow-heads, to bring savage ritual to the surface of classical religion. In sore need, a human victim was only too likely to be demanded; while a feast day, or a mystery, set the Greeks dancing serpent-dances or bear-dances like Red Indians, or swimming with sacred pigs, or leaping about in imitation of wolves, or holding a dog-feast, and offering dogs' flesh to the gods.² Thus the student of folklore soon finds that he must enlarge his field, and examine, not only popular European story and practice, but savage ways and ideas, and the myths and usages of the educated classes in civilised races. In this extended sense the term "folklore" will frequently be used in the following essays. The idea of the writer is that mythology cannot fruitfully be studied apart from folklore, while some knowledge of anthropology is required in both sciences.

The science of Folklore, if we may call it a science, finds everywhere, close to the surface of civilised life, the remains of ideas as old as the stone elf-shots, older than the celt of bronze. In proverbs and riddles, and nursery tales and superstitions, we detect the relics of a stage of thought which is dying out in Europe, but which still exists in many parts of the world. Now, just as the

flint arrow-heads are scattered every where, in all the continents and isles and everywhere are much alike, and bear no very definite marks of the special influence of race, so it is with the habits and legends investigated by the student of folklore. The stone arrow-head buried in a Scottish cairn is like those which were interred with Algonquin chiefs. The flints found in Egyptian soil, or beside the tumulus or the plain of Marathon, nearly resemble the stones which tip the reed arrow of the modern Samoyed. Perhaps only a skilled experience could discern, in a heap of such arrow-heads, the specimens which are found in America or Africa from those which are unearthed in Europe. Even in the products of more advanced industry we see early pottery, for example, so closely alike everywhere that, in the British Museum Mexican vases have, ere now, been mixed up on the same shelf with archaic vessels from Greece. In the same way, if a superstition or a riddle were offered to a student of folklore, he would have much difficulty in guessing its *provenance*, and naming the race from which it was brought. Suppose you tell a folklorist that, in a certain country, when anyone sneezes, people say "Good luck to you," the student cannot say *a priori* what country you refer to, what race you have in your thoughts. It may be Florida, as Florida was when first discovered; it may be Zululand, or West Africa, or ancient Rome, or Homeric Greece, or Palestine. In all these, and many other regions, the sneeze was welcomed as an auspicious omen. The little superstition is as widely distributed as the flint arrow-heads. Just as the object and use of the arrow-heads became intelligible when we found similar weapons in actual use among savages, so the salutation to the sneezer becomes intelligible when we learn that the savage has a good reason for it. He thinks the sneeze expels an evil spirit. Proverbs, again and riddles are as universally scattered

¹ About twenty years ago, the widow of an Irish farmer, in Derry, killed her deceased husband's horse. When remonstrated with by her landlord, she said: "Would you have my man go about on foot in the next world?" She was quite in the savage intellectual stage.

² "At the solemn festival suppers, ordained for the honour of the gods, they forget not to serve up certain dishes of young whelps' flesh" (Pliny, *H. N.*, xxix. 4).

and the Wolufs puzzle over the same *devinettes* as the Scotch schoolboy or the Breton peasant. Thus, for instance, the Wolufs of Senegal ask each other, "What flies for ever, and rests never?"—Answer, "The Wind." "Who are the comrades that always fight, and never hurt each other?"—"The Teeth." In France, as we read in the *Recueil de Caletbours*, the people ask, "What runs faster than a horse, crosses water, and is not wet?"—Answer, "The Sun." The Samoans put the riddle, "A man who stands between two ravenous fishes?"—Answer, "The tongue between the teeth." Again, "There are twenty brothers, each with a hat on his head?"—Answer, "Fingers and toes, with nails for hats." This is like the French "*Un père a douze fils?*"—"L'an."¹ A comparison of M. Rolland's *Devinettes* with the Woluf conundrums of Boilat, the Samoan examples in Turner's *Samoa*, and the Scotch enigmas collected by Chambers, will show the identity of peasant and savage humour.

A few examples, less generally known, may be given to prove that the beliefs of folklore are not peculiar to any one race or stock of men. The first case is remarkable; it occurs in Mexico and Ceylon, and has been found in other regions. In *Macmillan's Magazine*² is published a paper by Mrs. Edwards, called "The Mystery of the Pezazi." The events described in this narrative occurred on August 28th, 1876, in a bungalow some thirty miles from Badiella. The narrator occupied a new house on an estate called Allagalla. Her native servants soon asserted that the place was haunted by a Pezazi. The English visitors saw and heard nothing extraordinary till a certain night. An abridged account of what happened then may be given in the words of Mrs. Edwards:—

Wrapped in dreams, I lay, on the

night in question, tranquilly sleeping, but gradually roused to a perception that discordant sounds disturbed the serenity of my slumber. Loth to stir, I still dozed on, the sounds, however, becoming, as it seemed, more determined to make themselves heard; and I awoke to the consciousness that they proceeded from a belt of adjacent jungle, and resembled the noise that would be produced by some person felling timber.

Shutting my ears to the disturbance, I made no sign, until, with an expression of impatience, E—— suddenly started up, when I laid a detaining grasp upon his arm, murmuring that there was no need to think of rising at present—it must be quite early, and the kitchen cooly was doubtless cutting firewood in good time. E—— responded, in a tone of slight contempt, that no one could be cutting firewood at that hour, and the sounds were more suggestive of felling jungle; and he then inquired how long I had been listening to them. Now thoroughly aroused, I replied that I had heard the sounds for some time, at first confusing them with my dreams, but soon sufficiently awakening to the fact that they were no mere phantoms of my imagination, but a reality. During our conversation the noises became more distinct and loud; blow after blow resounded, as of the axe descending upon the tree, followed by the crash of the falling timber. Renewed blows announced the repetition of the operations on another tree, and continued till several were devastated.

It is unnecessary to tell more of the tale. In spite of minute examinations and close search, no solution of the mystery of the noises, on this or any other occasion, was ever found. The natives, of course, attributed the disturbance to the *Pezazi* or goblin. No one, perhaps, has asserted that the Aztecs were connected by ties of race with the people of Ceylon. Yet, when the Spaniards conquered Mexico, and when Sahagun (one of the earliest missionaries) collected the legends of the people, he found them, like the Cingalese, strong believers in the mystic tree-felling. We translate Sahagun's account of the "midnight axe":—

¹ Compare Cleobulus, Fr. 2; Bergk, *Lyr. Gr.*, iii. 201. Ed. 4.

² November, 1880.

When so any man heareth the sound of strokes in the night as if one were felling trees, he reckons it an evil boding. And this sound they call *youaltepuszli* (*youalli*, night; and *tepuszli*, copper), which signifies "the midnight hatchet." The noise cometh about the time of the first sleep, when all men slumber soundly, and the night is still. The sound of strokes smitten was first noted by the temple-servants, called *ilamacasque*, at the hour when they go in the night to make their offering of reeds or of boughs of pine, for so was their custom; and this penance they did on the neighbouring hills, and that when the night was far spent. Whenever they heard such a sound as one makes when he splits wood with an axe (a noise that may be heard afar off), they drew thence an omen of evil, and were afraid, and said that the sounds were part of the witchery of Tezcatlipoca, that often thus dismayeth men who journey in the night. Now, when tidings of these things came to a certain brave man, one exercised in war, he drew near, being guided by the sound, till he came to the very cause of the hubbub. And when he came upon it, with difficulty he caught it, for the thing was hard to catch; natheless, at last he overtook that which ran before him; and behold, it was a man without a heart, and, on either side of the chest, two holes that opened and shut, and so made the noise. Then the man put his hand within the breast of the figure and grasped the breast and shook it hard, demanding some grace or gift.

As a rule, the grace demanded was power to make captives in war. The curious coincidence of the "midnight axe" occurring in lands so remote as Ceylon and Mexico, and the singular attestation by an English lady of the actual existence of the disturbance, makes this *youaltepuszli* one of the quaintest things in the province of the folklorist. But, whatever the cause of the noise, or of the beliefs connected with the noise, may be, no one would explain them as the result of community of race between Cingalese and Aztecs. Nor would this explanation be offered to account for the Aztec and English belief that the creaking of furniture is an omen

of death in a house. Obviously, th opinions are the expressions of a common state of superstitious fancy, not the sign of an original community of origin.¹

Let us take another piece of folklore. All North-country English folk know the *Kernababy*. The custom of the "Kernababy" is commonly observed in England or, at all events, in Scotland, where the writer has seen many a kernababy. The last gleanings of the last field are bound up in a rude imitation of the human shape, and dressed in some tag-rags and finery. The usage has fallen into the conservative hands of children; but the old "the Maiden" was a regular image of the harvest goddess, which, with sickle and sheaves in her arms, attended by a crowd of reapers, and accompanied with music, followed the last carts hom to the farm.² It is odd enough that "the Maiden" should exactly translate *Kóρη*, the old Sicilian name of the daughter of Demeter. "The Maiden" has dwindled, then, among us to the rudimentary kernababy; but ancient Peru had her own Maiden, her Harvest Goddess. Here it is easy to trace the natural idea at the basis of the superstitious practice which links the shores of the Pacific with our own northern coast. Just as a portion of the yule-log and of the Christmas bread were kept all the year through, a kind of nest-egg of plenteous food and fire, so the kernababy, English or Peruvian, is an earnest that corn will not fail all through the year, till next harvest comes. For this reason the kernababy used to be treasured from autumn's end to autumn's end, though now it commonly disappears very soon after the harvest home. It is thus

¹ Mr. Leslie Stephen points out to me that De Quincey's brother heard the "midnight axe" in the Galapagos Islands (*Autobiographical Sketches*, "My Brother"); see *ante* pp. 4-5. It is known in Ireland and Madagascar.

² "Ah, once again may I plant the great fan on her corn-heap, while she stands smiling by, Demeter of the threshing-floor, with sheaves and poppies in her hands" (Theocritus, vii., 155-57).

esethat Acosta describes in Grimston's old nontranslation (1604) the Peruvian kernal-baby and the Peruvian harvest home:—

ore. This feast is made comming from the the chacra or farme unto the house, saying the certain songs, and praying that the rna: Mays (maize) may long continue, the and which they call *Mama cora*

the What a chance this word offers to The etymologists of the old school: how sun promptly they would recognise, in *mama* ma mother—*μήτηρ*, and in *cora*—*κόρη*, the s: c Mother and the Maiden, the feast of the the Demeter and Persephone! However, it o the days of that old school of anti-nag: quarianism are numbered. To return th: to the Peruvian harvest home:—

idec They take a certaine portion of the niec most fruitfull of the Mays that grows ome in their farmes, the which they put in a tha certain granary which they do calle slat Pirua, with certaine ceremonies, watching th being three nightes; they put this Mays in len: the richest garments they have, and, the worship this Pirua, and hold it in great sien: veneration, saying it is the Mother of the ves: the Mays of their inheritances, and that by the preserved. In this moneth they make a per: particular sacrifice, and the witches ores demand of this Pirua "if it hath strength iern: sufficient to continue until next yeare"; -log: and if it answers "No," then they carry cept: this Mays to the farme to burne, whence egg: they brought it, according to every man's rna: power; then they make another Pirua, tes: with the same ceremonies, saying that the this reneue it, to the ende that the seede red: of the Mays may not perish. nd, very hus

that The idea that the maize can speak need use" not surprise us; the Mexicans held much hical the same belief, according to Sahagun:— . It

t fan It was thought that if some grains of by: maize fell on the ground, he who saw savel: them lying there was bound to lift them, vii: wherein, if he failed, he harmed the maize, which plained itself of him to God, saying: "Lord, punish this man, who saw me fallen and raised me not again; punish him with famine, that he may learn not to hold me in dishonour."

In all this affair of the Scotch kernal-baby, and the Peruvian *Mama cora*, we need no explanation beyond the common

simple ideas of human nature. We are not obliged to hold either that the Peruvians and Scotch are akin by blood, or that, at some forgotten time, they met each other, and borrowed each other's superstitions.¹ Again, when we find Odysseus sacrificing a black sheep to the dead,² and when we read that the Ovahereroes in South Africa also appease with a black sheep the spirits of the departed, we do not feel it necessary to hint that the Ovahereroes are of Greek descent, or have borrowed their ritual from the Greeks. The connection between the colour black and mourning for the dead is natural and almost universal.

Examples like these might be adduced in any number. We might show how, in magic, negroes of Barbadoes make clay effigies of their enemies, and pierce them, just as Greeks did in Plato's time, or the men of Accad in remotest antiquity. We might remark the Australian black putting sharp bits of quartz in the tracks of an enemy who has gone by, that the enemy may be lamed; and we might point to Boris Godunof forbidding the same practice among the Russians. We might watch Scotch, and Australians, and Jews, and French, and Aztecs spreading dust round the body of a dead man, that the footprints of his ghost, or of other ghosts, may be detected next morning. We might point to a similar device in a modern novel, where the presence of a ghost is suspected, as proof of the similar workings of the Australian mind and of the mind of Mrs. Riddell. We shall later turn to ancient Greece, and show how the serpent-dances, the habit of smearing the body with clay, and other odd rites of the mysteries, were common to Hellenic religion and to the religion of African, Australian, and American tribes.

Now, with regard to all these strange usages, what is the method of folklore?

¹ In Mr. Frazer's *Golden Bough* is a very large collection of similar harvest rites.

² *Odyssey*, xi., 32.

The method is, when an apparently irrational and anomalous custom is found in any country, to look for a country where a similar practice is found, and where the practice is not irrational and anomalous, but in harmony with the manners and ideas of the people among whom it prevails. That Greeks should dance about in their mysteries with harmless serpents in their hands looks quite unintelligible. When a wild tribe of Red Indians does the same thing, as a trial of courage, with real rattlesnakes, we understand the Red Man's motives, and may conjecture that similar motives once existed among the ancestors of the Greeks. Our method, then, is to compare the seemingly meaningless customs or manners of civilised races with the similar customs and manners which exist among the uncivilised and still retain their meaning. It is not necessary for comparison of this sort that the uncivilised and the civilised race should be of the same stock, nor need we prove that they were ever in contact with each other. Similar conditions of mind produce similar practices, apart from identity of race, or borrowing of ideas and manners.

Let us return to the example of the flint arrow-heads. Everywhere neolithic arrow-heads are pretty much alike. The cause of the resemblance is no more than this: that men, with the same needs, the same materials, and the same rude instruments, everywhere produced the same kind of arrow-head. No hypothesis of interchange of ideas or of community of race is needed to explain the resemblance of form in the missiles. Very early pottery in any region is, for the same causes, like very early pottery in any other region. The same sort of similarity was explained by the same resemblances in human nature, when we touched on the identity of magical practices and of superstitious beliefs. This method is fairly well established and orthodox when we deal with usages and superstitious beliefs; but may we apply the same method when we deal with myths?

Here a difficulty occurs. Mythologists as a rule, are averse to the method of folklore. They think it scientific to compare only the myths of races which speak languages of the same family, and of races which have, in historic times, been actually in proved contact with each other. Thus, most mythologists hold it correct to compare Greek, Slavonic, Celtic, and Indian stories, because Greeks, Slavs, Celts, and Hindoos all speak languages of the same family. Again, they hold it correct to compare Chaldean and Greek myths, because the Greeks and the Chaldeans were brought into contact through the Phœnicians, and by other intermediaries, such as the Hittites. But the same mythologists will vow that it is unscientific to compare a Maori or a Hottentot or an Eskimo myth with an Aryan story, because Maoris and Eskimo and Hottentots do not speak languages akin to that of Greece, nor can we show that the ancestors of Greeks, Maoris, Hottentots, and Eskimo were ever in contact with each other in historical times.

Now, the peculiarity of the method of folklore is that it will venture to compare (with due caution and due examination of evidence) the myths of the most widely severed races. Holding that myth is a product of the early human fancy, working on the most rudimentary knowledge of the outer world, the student of folklore thinks that differences of race do not much affect the early mythopœic faculty. He will not be surprised if Greeks and Australian blacks are in the same tale.

In each case, he holds, all the circumstances of the case must be examined and considered. For instance, when the Australians tell a myth about the Pleiades very like the Greek myth of the Pleiades, we must ask a number of questions. Is the Australian version authentic? Can the people who told it have heard it from a European? If these questions are answered so as to make it apparent that the Australian Pleiad myth is of genuine native origin, we need not fly

to the conclusion that the Australians are a lost and forlorn branch of the Aryan race. Two other hypotheses present themselves. First, the human species is of unknown antiquity. In the moderate allowance of 250,000 years there is time for stories to have wandered all round the world, as the Aggrs beads of Ashanti have probably crossed the continent from Egypt, as the Asiatic jade (if Asiatic it be) arrived at ancient Troy or came into Swiss lake-dwellings, as an African trade-cowry is said to have been found in a Cornish barrow, as an Indian Ocean shell has been discovered in a prehistoric bone-cave in Poland. This slow filtration of tales is not absolutely out of the question. Two causes would especially help to transmit myths. The first is slavery and slave-stealing; the second is the habit of capturing brides from alien stocks, and the law which forbids marriage with a woman of a man's own totem. Alien slaves and captured brides would bring their native legends among alien peoples.

But there is another possible way of explaining the resemblance (granting that it is proved) of the Greek and Australian Pleiad myth. The object of both myths is to account for the grouping and other phenomena of the constellations. May not similar explanatory stories have occurred to the ancestors of the Australians, and to the ancestors of the Greeks, however remote their home, while they were still in the savage condition? The best way to investigate this point is to collect all known savage and civilised stellar myths, and see what points they have in common. If they all agree in character, though the Greek tales are full of grace, while those of the Australians or Brazilians are rude enough, we may plausibly account for the similarity of myths as we accounted for the similarity of flint arrow-heads. The myths, like the arrow-heads, resemble each other because they were originally framed to meet the same needs out of the same material. In the case of the arrow-heads, the need was for something

hard, heavy, and sharp—the material was flint. In the case of the myths, the need was to explain certain phenomena—the material (so to speak) was an early state of the human mind, to which all objects seemed equally endowed with human personality, and to which no metamorphosis appeared impossible.

In the following essays, then, the myths and customs of various peoples will be compared, even when these peoples talk languages of alien families, and have never (so far as history shows us) been in actual contact. Our method throughout will be to place the usage, or myth, which is unintelligible when found among a civilised race, beside the similar myth which is intelligible enough when it is found among savages. A mean term will be found in the folklore preserved by the non-progressive classes in a progressive people. This folklore represents, in the midst of a civilised race, the savage ideas out of which civilisation has been evolved. The conclusion will usually be that the fact which puzzles us by its presence in civilisation is a relic surviving from the time when the ancestors of a civilised race were in the state of savagery. By this method it is not necessary that "some sort of genealogy should be established" between the Australian and the Greek narrators of a similar myth, nor between the Greek and Australian possessors of a similar usage. The hypothesis will be that the myth, or usage, is common to both races, not because of original community of stock, not necessarily because of contact and borrowing, but because the ancestors of the Greeks passed through the savage intellectual condition in which we find the Australians.

The questions may be asked, Has race nothing, then, to do with myth? Do peoples never consciously borrow myths from each other? The answer is that race has a great deal to do with the development of myth, if it be race which confers on a people its national genius, its artistic gifts, and its capacity of becoming civilised. If race

does this, then race affects, in the most powerful manner, the ultimate development of myth. No one is likely to confound a Homeric myth with a myth from the Edda, nor either with a myth from a Brahmana, though in all three cases the substance, the original set of ideas, may be much the same. In all three you have anthropomorphic gods, capable of assuming animal shapes, tricky, capricious, limited in many undivine ways, yet endowed with magical powers. So far the mythical gods of Homer, of the Edda, of any of the Brahmanas, are on a level with each other, and not much above the gods of savage mythology. This stuff of myth is *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*, and is the original gift of the savage intellect. But the final treatment, the ultimate literary form of the myth, varies in each race. Homeric gods, like Red Indian, Thlinket, or Australian gods, can assume the shapes of birds. But when we read, in Homer, of the arming of Athene, the hunting of Artemis, the vision of golden Aphrodite, the apparition of Hermes, like a young man when the flower of youth is loveliest, then we recognise the effect of race upon myth, the effect of the Greek genius at work on rude material. Between the Olympians and a Thlinket god there is all the difference that exists between the Demeter of Cnidos and an image from Easter Island. Again, the Scandinavian gods, when their tricks are laid aside, when Odin is neither assuming the shape of worm nor of raven, have a martial dignity, a noble enduring spirit of their own. Race comes out in that, as it does in the endless sacrifices, soma drinking, magical austerities, and puerile follies of Vedic and Brahmanic gods, the deities of a people fallen early into its sacerdotage and priestly second childhood. Thus race declares itself in the ultimate literary form and character of mythology, while the common savage basis and stuff of myths may be clearly discerned in the horned, and cannibal, and shape-shifting, and adulterous gods of Greece, of India,

of the North. They all show their common savage origin, when the poet neglects Freya's command and tells of what the gods did "in the morning of Time."

As to borrowing, we have already shown that in prehistoric times there must have been much transmission of myth. The migrations of peoples, the traffic in slaves, the law of exogamy, which always keeps bringing alien women into the families—all these things favoured the migration of myth. But the process lies behind history: we can only guess at it, we can seldom trace a popular legend on its travels. In the case of the cultivated ancient peoples, we know that they themselves believed they had borrowed their religions from each other. When the Greeks first found the Egyptians practising mysteries like their own, they leaped to the conclusion that their own rites had been imported from Egypt. We, who know that both Greek and Egyptian rites had many points in common with those of Mandans, Zunis, Bushmen, Australians—people quite unconnected with Egypt—feel less confident about the hypothesis of borrowing. We may, indeed, regard Adonis, and Zeus Bageus, and Melicertes, as importations from Phoenicia. In later times, too, the Greeks, and still more the Romans, extended a free hospitality to alien gods and legends, to Serapis, Isis, the wilder Dionysiac revels, and so forth. But this habit of borrowing was regarded with disfavour by pious conservatives, and was probably, in the width of its hospitality at least, an innovation. As Tiele remarks, we cannot derive Dionysus from the Assyrian *Daian nisi*, "judge of men," a name of the solar god Samas, without ascertaining that the wine-god exercised judicial functions, and was a god of the sun. These derivations, "shocking to common sense," are to be distrusted as part of the intoxication of new learning. Some Assyrian scholars actually derive *Hades* from *Bit Edi* or *Bit Hadi*—"though unluckily," says Tiele, "there

is no such word in the Assyrian text." On the whole topic Tiele's essay¹ deserves to be consulted. Granting, then, that elements in the worship of Dionysus, Aphrodite, and other gods, may have been imported with the strange Ægypto-Assyrian vases and jewels of the Sidonians, we still find the same basis of rude savage ideas. We may push back

a god from Greece to Phœnicia, from Phœnicia to Accadia; but, at the end of the end, we reach a legend full of myths like those which Bushmen tell by the camp fire, Eskimo in their dark huts, and Australians in the shade of the *gunyah*—myths cruel, puerile, obscene, like the fancies of the savage myth-makers from which they sprang.

¹ *Revue de l'Hist. des Rel.*, vol. ii.

II.

THE BULL-ROARER

A STUDY OF THE MYSTERIES

As the belated traveller makes his way through the monotonous plains of Australia, through the Bush, with its level expanses and clumps of grey-blue gum trees, he occasionally hears a singular sound. Beginning low, with a kind of sharp tone thrilling through a whirring noise, it grows louder and louder, till it becomes a sort of fluttering windy roar. If the traveller be a new-comer, he is probably puzzled to the last degree. If he be an Englishman, country-bred, he says to himself, "Why, that is the bull-roarer." If he knows the colony and the ways of the natives, he knows that the blacks are celebrating their tribal mysteries. The roaring noise is made to warn all women to keep out of the way. Just as Pentheus was killed (with the approval of Theocritus) because he profaned the rites of the women worshippers of Dionysus, so, among the Australian blacks, men must, at their peril, keep out of the way of female, and women out of the way of male, celebrations.

The instrument which produces the sounds that warn women to remain afar

is a toy familiar to English country lads. They call it the bull-roarer. The common bull-roarer is an inexpensive toy which anyone can make. I do not, however, recommend it to families, for two reasons. In the first place, it produces a most horrible and unexampled din, which endears it to the very young, but renders it detested by persons of mature age. In the second place, the character of the toy is such that it will almost infallibly break all that is fragile in the house where it is used, and will probably put out the eyes of some of the inhabitants. Having thus, I trust, said enough to prevent all good boys from inflicting bull-roarers on their parents, pastors and masters, I proceed (in the interests of science) to show how the toy is made. Nothing can be less elaborate. You take a piece of the commonest wooden board, say the lid of a packing-case, about a sixth of an inch in thickness, and about eight inches long and three broad, and you sharpen the ends. When finished, the toy may be about the shape of a large bay-leaf, or a "fish" used as a counter (that is how the New

Zealanders make it), or the sides may be left plain in the centre, and only sharpened towards the extremities, as in an Australian example lent me by Mr. Tylor. Then tie a strong piece of string, about thirty inches long, to one end of the piece of wood, and the bull-roarer (the Australian natives call it *turndun*, and the Greeks call it *βόμβος*) is complete. Now twist the end of the string tightly about your finger and whirl the bull-roarer rapidly round and round. For a few moments nothing will happen. In a very interesting lecture delivered at the Royal Institution, Mr. Tylor once exhibited a bull-roarer. At first it did nothing particular when it was whirled round, and the audience began to fear that the experiment was like those chemical ones often exhibited at institutes in the country, which contribute at most a disagreeable odour to the education of the populace. But when the bull-roarer warmed to its work, it justified its name, producing what may best be described as a mighty rushing noise, as if some supernatural being "fluttered and buzzed its wings with fearful roar." Grown-up people, of course, are satisfied with a very brief experience of this din, but boys have always known the bull-roarer in England as one of the most efficient modes of making the hideous and unearthly noises in which it is the privilege of youth to delight.

The bull-roarer has, of all toys, the widest diffusion, and the most extraordinary history. To study the bull-roarer is to take a lesson in folklore. The instrument is found among the most widely severed peoples, savage and civilised, and is used in the celebration of savage and civilised mysteries. There are students who would found on this a hypothesis that the various races which use the bull-roarer all descend from the same stock. But the bull-roarer is introduced here for the very purpose of showing that similar minds, working with simple means towards similar ends, might evolve the bull-roarer and its

mystic uses anywhere. There is no need for a hypothesis of common origin, or of borrowing, to account for this widely diffused sacred object.

The bull-roarer has been, and is, a sacred and magical instrument in many and widely separated lands. It is found, always as a sacred instrument, employed in religious mysteries, in New Mexico, in Australia, in New Zealand, in ancient Greece, and in Africa; while, as we have seen, it is a peasant boy's plaything in England. A number of questions are naturally suggested by the bull-roarer. Is it a thing invented once for all, and carried abroad over the world by wandering races, or handed on from one people and tribe to another? Or is the bull-roarer a toy that might be accidentally hit on in any country where men can sharpen wood and twist the sinews of animals into string? Was the thing originally a toy, and is its religious and mystical nature later; or was it originally one of the properties of the priest, or medicine-man, which in England has dwindled to a plaything? Lastly, was this mystical instrument at first employed in the rites of a civilised people like the Greeks, and was it in some way borrowed or inherited by South Africans, Australians, and New Mexicans? Or is it a mere savage invention, surviving (like certain other features of the Greek mysteries) from a distant state of savagery? Our answer to all these questions is that in all probability the presence of the *βόμβος*, or bull-roarer, in Greek mysteries was a survival from the time when Greeks were in the social condition of Australians.

In the first place, the bull-roarer is associated with mysteries and initiations. Now, mysteries and initiations are things that tend to dwindle and to lose their characteristic features as civilisation advances. The rites of baptism and confirmation are not secret and hidden; they are common to both sexes, they are publicly performed, and religion and morality of the purest sort blend in these ceremonies. There are no other

initiations or mysteries that civilised modern man is expected necessarily to pass through. On the other hand, looking widely at human history, we find mystic rites and initiations numerous, stringent, severe, and magical in character, in proportion to the lack of civilisation in those who practise them. The less the civilisation, the more mysterious and the more cruel are the rites. The more cruel the rites, the less is the civilisation. The red-hot poker with which Mr. Bouncer terrified Mr. Verdant Green at the sham masonic rites would have been quite in place, a natural instrument of probationary torture, in the Freemasonry of Australians, Mandans, or Hottentots. In the mysteries of Demeter or Bacchus, in the mysteries of a civilised people, the red-hot poker, or any other instrument of torture, would have been out of place. But in the Greek mysteries, just as in those of South Africans, Red Indians, and Australians, the disgusting practice of bedaubing the neophyte with dirt and clay was preserved. We have nothing quite like that in modern initiations. Except at Sparta, Greeks dropped the tortures inflicted on boys and girls in the initiations superintended by the cruel Artemis.¹ But Greek mysteries retained the daubing with mud and the use of the bull-roarer. On the whole, then, and on a general view of the subject, we prefer to think that the bull-roarer in Greece was a survival from savage mysteries, not that the bull-roarer in New Mexico, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa is a relic of civilisation.

Let us next observe a remarkable peculiarity of the *turndun*, or Australian

bull-roarer. The bull-roarer in England is a toy. In Australia, according to Howitt and Fison,² the bull-roarer is regarded with religious awe. "When, on lately meeting with two of the surviving Kurnai, I spoke to them of the *turndun*, they first looked cautiously round them to see that no one else was looking, and then answered me in undertones." The chief peculiarity in connection with the *turndun* is that women may never look upon it. The Chepara tribe, who call it *bribbun*, have a custom that, "if seen by a woman, or shown by a man to a woman, the punishment to both is *death*."

Among the Kurnai, the sacred mystery of the *turndun* is preserved by a legend, which gives a supernatural sanction to secrecy. When boys go through the mystic ceremony of initiation they are shown *turnduns*, or bull-roarers, and made to listen to their hideous din. They are then told that, if ever a woman is allowed to see a *turndun*, the earth will open, and water will cover the globe. The old men point spears at the boys' eyes, saying: "If you tell this to any woman, you will die, you will see the ground broken up and like the sea; if you tell this to any woman, or to any child, you will be killed!" As in Athens, in Syria, and among the Mandans, the deluge-tradition of Australia is connected with the mysteries. In Gippsland there is a tradition of the deluge. "Some children of the Kurnai, in playing about, found a *turndun*, which they took home to the camp and showed the women. Immediately the earth crumbled away, and it was all water, and the Kurnai were drowned."

In consequence of all this mummery, the Australian women attach great sacredness to the very name of the *turndun*. They are much less instructed in their own theology than the men of the tribe. One woman believed she had heard Pundjel, the chief supernatural being, descend in a mighty rushing noise—that

¹ Pausanias, iii. 15. When the boys were being cruelly scourged, the priestess of Artemis Orthia held an ancient barbaric wooden image of the goddess in her hands. If the boys were spared, the image grew heavy; the more they were tortured, the lighter grew the image. In Samoa the image (shark's teeth) of the god Taema is consulted before battle. "If it felt heavy, that was a bad omen; if light, the sign was good"—the god was pleased (Turner's *Samoa*, p. 55).

² *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, p. 268.

is, in the sound of the turndun, when boys were being "made men," or initiated.¹ On turnduns the Australian sorcerers can fly up to heaven. Turnduns carved with imitations of water-flowers are used by medicine-men in rain-making. New Zealand also has her bull-roarers; some of them, carved in relief, are in the Christy Museum, and one is engraved here. I have no direct evidence as to the use of these Maori bull-roarers in the Maori mysteries. Their employment, however, may perhaps be provisionally inferred.

One can readily believe that the New Zealand bull-roarer may be whirled by



any man who is repeating a *Karakia*, or "charm to raise the wind":—

Loud wind,
Lasting wind,
Violent whistling wind,
Dig up the calm reposing sky,
Come, come.

In New Zealand² "the natives regarded the wind as an indication of the presence of their god"—a superstition not peculiar to Maori religion. The "cold wind" felt blowing over the hands at spiritualistic *séances* is also regarded (by some spiritualists) as an indication of the presence of supernatural beings. The windy roaring noise made by the bull-roarer might readily be considered by savages, either as an invitation to a god who should present himself in storm, or as a proof of his being at hand. We have seen that

this view was actually taken by an Australian woman. The hymn called "breath," or *haha*, a hymn to the mystic wind, is pronounced by Maori priests at the moment of the initiation of young men in the tribal mysteries. It is an old conjecture, and is capable of disproof, that the use of the *mystica vannus Iacchi* was a mode of raising a sacred wind analogous to that employed by whirlers of the turndun.³

Servius, the ancient commentator on Virgil, mentions, among other opinions, this—that the *vannus* was a sieve, and that it symbolised the purifying effect of the mysteries. But it is clear that Servius was only guessing; and he offers other explanations, among them that the *vannus* was a crate to hold offerings, *primitias frugum*.

We have studied the bull-roarer in Australia, we have caught a glimpse of it in England. Its existence on the American continent is proved by letters from New Mexico, and by a passage in Mr. Frank Cushing's *Adventures in Zuni*.² In Zuni, too, among a semi-civilised Indian tribe, or rather a tribe which has left the savage for the barbaric condition, we find the bull-roarer.³ Here, too, the instrument—a "slat" Mr. Cushing calls it—is used as a call to the ceremonial observance of the tribal ritual. The Zunis have various "orders of a more or less sacred and sacerdotal character." Mr. Cushing writes:—

These orders were engaged in their annual ceremonies, of which little was

¹ This is not the view of le Père Lafitau, a learned Jesuit missionary in North America, who wrote (1724) a work on savage manners compared with the manners of heathen antiquity. Lafitau, who was greatly struck with the resemblances between Greek and Iroquois or Carib initiations, takes Servius's other explanation of the *mystica vannus*, "an osier vessel containing rural offerings of first fruits." This exactly answers, says Lafitau, to the Carib *Matoutou*, on which they offer sacred cassava cakes.

² *The Century Magazine*, May, 1883.

³ A minute account of the mysteries of Pueblo Indians, and their use of the bull-roarer, will be found in Captain Bourke's *Snake Dance of the Moquis*.

¹ Fison, *Journal Anthropol. Soc.*, Nov., 1883.

² Taylor's *New Zealand*, p. 181.

told or shown me ; but at the end of four days I heard one morning a *deep whirling noise*. Running out, I saw a procession of three priests of the bow, in plumed helmets and closely-fitting cuirasses, both of thick buckskin—gorgeous and solemn with sacred embroideries and war-paint, begirt with bows, arrows, and war-clubs, and each distinguished by his badge of degree—coming down one of the narrow streets. The principal priest carried in his arms a wooden idol, ferocious in aspect, yet beautiful with its decorations of shell, turquoise, and brilliant paint. It was nearly hidden by symbolic slats and prayer-sticks most elaborately plumed. He was preceded by a guardian with drawn bow and arrows, while another followed, *twirling the sounding slat*, which had attracted alike my attention and that of hundreds of the Indians, who hurriedly flocked to the roofs of the adjacent houses, or lined the street, bowing their heads in adoration, and scattering sacred prayer-meal on the god and his attendant priests. Slowly they wound their way down the hill, across the river, and off towards the mountain of Thunder. Soon an identical procession followed and took its way towards the western hills. I watched them long, until they disappeared, and a few hours afterwards there arose from the top of "Thunder Mountain" a dense column of smoke, simultaneously with another from the more distant western mesa of "U-hana-mi," or "Mount of the Beloved."

Then they told me that for four days I must neither touch nor eat flesh or oil of any kind, and for ten days neither throw any refuse from my doors nor permit a spark to leave my house, for "This was the season of the year when the 'grand-mother of men' (fire) was precious."

Here then, in Zuni we have the bull-roarer again, and once more we find it employed as a summons to the mysteries. We do not learn, however, that women in Zuni are forbidden to look upon the bull-roarer. Finally, the South African evidence, which is supplied by letters from a correspondent of Mr. Tylor's, proves that in South Africa, too, the bull-roarer is employed to call the men to the celebration of secret functions. A minute description of the instrument,

and of its magical power to raise a wind, is given in Theal's *Kaffir Folklore*, p. 209. The bull-roarer has but lately been a subject of particular research ; very probably later investigations will find it in other parts of the modern world besides America, Africa, New Zealand, and Australia. I have myself been fortunate enough to encounter the bull-roarer on the soil of ancient Greece and in connection with the Dionysiac mysteries. Clemens of Alexandria, and Arnobius, an early Christian Father who follows Clemens, describe certain toys of the child Dionysus which were used in the mysteries. Among these are *turbines*, κῶνοι and ῥόμβοι. The ordinary dictionaries interpret all these as whipping-tops, adding that ῥόμβος is sometimes "a magic wheel." The ancient scholiast on Clemens, however, writes : "The κῶνος is a little piece of wood, to which a string is fastened, and in the mysteries it was whirled round to make a roaring noise."¹ Here, in short, we have a brief but complete description of the bull-roarer, of the Australian *turndun*. No single point is omitted. The κῶνος, like the *turndun*, is a small object of wood, it is tied to a string, when whirled round it produces a roaring noise, and it is used at initiations. This is not the end of the matter.

In the part of the Dionysiac mysteries at which the toys of the child Dionysus were exhibited, and during which (as it seems) the κῶνος, or bull-roarer, was whirled, the performers daubed themselves all over with clay. This we learn from a passage in which Demosthenes describes the youth of his hated adversary, Æschines. The mother of Æschines, he says, was a kind of "wise woman," and dabbler in mysteries. Æschines used to aid her by bedaubing the initiate over with clay and bran.² The word ἀπομάττων, here used by

¹ Κῶνος ξυλάριον οὐ ἐξήπται τὸ σπαρίον καὶ ἐν ταῖς τελεταῖς ἐδονεῖτο ἵνα ροιῇ Lobbeck, *Aglaophamus* (i., p. 700).

² *De Corona*, p. 313.

Demosthenes, is explained by Harporation as the ritual term for daubing the initiated. A story was told, as usual, to explain this rite. It was said that, when the Titans attacked Dionysus and tore him to pieces, they painted themselves first with clay, or gypsum, that they might not be recognised. Nonnus shows, in several places, that down to his time the celebrants of the Bacchic mysteries retained this dirty trick. Precisely the same trick prevails in the mysteries of savage peoples. Mr. Winwood Reade¹ reports the evidence of Mongilomba. When initiated, Mongilomba was "severely flogged in the Fetich House" (as young Spartans were flogged before the animated image of Artemis), and then he was "plastered over with goat-dung." Among the natives of Victoria,² the "body of the initiated is bedaubed with clay, mud, charcoal powder, and filth of every kind." The girls are plastered with charcoal powder and white clay, answering to the Greek gypsum. Similar daubings were performed at the mysteries by the Mandans, as described by Catlin; and the Zunis made raids on Mr. Cushing's black paint and Chinese ink for like purposes. On the Congo Mr. Johnson found precisely the same ritual in the initiations. Here, then, not to multiply examples, we discover two singular features in common between Greek and savage mysteries. Both Greeks and savages employ the bull-roarer, both bedaub the initiated with dirt or with white paint or chalk. As to the meaning of the latter very un-Aryan practice, one has no idea, unless it represents the impure uninitiated condition, cleansed later by ceremonies of initiation. It is only certain that war parties of Australian blacks bedaub themselves with white clay to alarm their enemies in night attacks. The

Phocians, according to Herodotus (viii. 27), adopted the same "aisy stratagem," as Captain Costigan has it. Tellies, the medicine-man (*μάντις*), chalked some sixty Phocians, whom he sent to make a night attack on the Thessalians. The sentinels of the latter were seized with supernatural horror, and fled; "and after the sentinels went the army." In the same way, in a night attack among the Australian Kurnai,³ "they all rapidly painted themselves with pipe-clay; red ochre is no use, it cannot frighten the enemy." If, then, Greeks in the historic period kept up Australian tactics, it is probable that the ancient mysteries of Greece might retain the habit of daubing the initiated which occurs in savage rites.

"Come now," as Herodotus would say, "I will show once more that the mysteries of the Greeks resemble those of Bushmen." In Lucian's Treatise on Dancing² we read: "I pass over the fact that you cannot find a single ancient mystery in which there is not dancing. To prove this I will not mention the secret acts of worship, on account of the uninitiated. But this much all men know, that most people say of those who reveal the mysteries, that they 'dance them out.'" Here Liddell and Scott write, rather weakly, "to dance out, let out, betray, probably of some dance which burlesqued these ceremonies." It is extremely improbable that, in an age when it was still forbidden to reveal the *δρυα*, or secret rites, those rites would be mocked in popular burlesques. Lucian obviously intends to say that the matter of the mysteries was set forth in *ballets d'action*. Now this is exactly the case in the surviving mysteries of the Bushmen. Shortly after the rebellion of Langalibalele's tribe, Mr. Orpen, the chief magistrate in St. John's Territory, made the acquaintance of Qing, one of the last of an all but exterminated tribe. Qing "had never seen a white man, except fighting," when he became Mr.

¹ *Savage Africa*. Captain Smith, the friend of Pocahontas, mentions the custom in his work on Virginia, pp. 245-48.

² Brough Smyth, i. 60, using evidence of Howitt, Taplin, Thomas, and Wilhelm.

³ *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, p. 241.

⁴ *Περὶ ὀρχήσεως*, c. 15.

Orpen's guide. He gave a good deal of information about the myths of his people, but refused to answer certain questions. "You are now asking the secrets that are not spoken of." Mr. Orpen asked, "Do you know the secrets?" Qing replied, "No, only the initiated men of that dance know these things." To "dance" this or that means, "to be acquainted with this or that mystery"; the dances were originally taught by Cagn, the mantis, or grasshopper god. In many mysteries Qing, as a young man, was not initiated. He could not "dance them out."¹

There are thus undeniably close resemblances between the Greek mysteries and those of the lowest contemporary races.

As to the bull-roarer, its recurrence among Greeks, Zunis, Kamilaroi, Maoris, and South African races would be regarded by some students as a proof that all these tribes had a common origin, or had borrowed the instrument from each other. But this theory is quite unnecessary. The bull-roarer is a very simple invention. Anyone might find out that a bit of sharpened wood, tied to a string, makes, when whirled, a roaring noise. Supposing that discovery made, it is soon turned to practical use. All tribes have their mysteries. All want a signal to summon the right persons together, and warn the wrong persons to keep out of the way. The church bell does as much for us; so did the shaken *seistrum* for the Egyptians. People with neither bells nor *seistra* find the bull-roarer, with its mysterious sound, serve their turn. The hiding of the instrument from women is natural enough. It merely makes the alarm and absence of the curious sex doubly sure. The stories of supernatural consequences to follow if a woman sees the turndun lend a sanction. This is not a random theory, without basis. In Brazil the natives have no bull-roarer, but they

have mysteries, and the presence of the women at the mysteries of the men is a terrible impiety. To warn away the women the Brazilians make loud "devil-music" on what are called "jurupari pipes." Now, just as in Australia, *the women may not see the jurupari pipes on pain of death*. When the sound of the jurupari pipes is heard, as when the turndun is heard in Australia, every woman flees and hides herself. The women are always executed if they see the pipes. Mr. Alfred Wallace bought a pair of these pipes, but he had to embark them at a distance from the village where they were procured. The seller was afraid that some unknown misfortune would occur if the women of his village set eyes on the juruparis.²

The conclusion from all these facts seems obvious. The bull-roarer is an instrument easily invented by savages, and easily adopted into the ritual of savage mysteries. If we find the bull-roarer used in the mysteries of the most civilised of ancient peoples, the most probable explanation is that the Greeks retained the mysteries, the bull-roarer, the habit of bedaubing the initiate, the torturing of boys, the sacred obscenities, the antics with serpents, the dances, and the like, from the time when their ancestors were in the savage condition. That more refined and religious ideas were afterwards introduced into the mysteries seems certain, but the rites were in many cases simply savage. Unintelligible (except as survivals) when found among Hellenes, they become intelligible enough among savages, because they correspond to the intellectual condition and magical fancies of the lower barbarism. The same sort of comparison, the same kind of explanation, will account, as we shall see, for the savage myths as well as for the savage customs which survived among the Greeks.

¹ *Cape Monthly Magazine*, July, 1874.

² Wallace, *Travels on the Amazon*, p. 349.

III.

A FAR-TRAVELLED TALE

A MODERN novelist has boasted that her books are read "from Tobolsk to Tangiers." This is a wide circulation, but the widest circulation in the world has probably been achieved by a story whose author, unlike Ouida, will never be known to fame. The tale which we are about to examine is, perhaps, of all myths the most widely diffused, yet there is no ready way of accounting for its extraordinary popularity. Any true "nature-myth," any myth which accounts for the processes of nature or the aspects of natural phenomena, may conceivably have been invented separately, wherever men in an early state of thought observed the same facts, and attempted to explain them by telling a story. Thus we have seen that the earlier part of the myth of Cronus is a nature-myth, setting forth the cause of the separation of Heaven and Earth. Star-myths, again, are everywhere similar, because men who believed all nature to be animated and personal accounted for the grouping of constellations in accordance with these crude beliefs.¹ Once more, if a story like that of "Cupid and Psyche" be found among the most diverse races, the distribution becomes intelligible if the myth was invented to illustrate or enforce a widely prevalent custom. But in the following story no such explanation is even provisionally acceptable.

The gist of the tale (which has many different "openings" and conclusions in different places) may be stated thus: A young man is brought to the home of a

hostile animal, a giant, cannibal, wizard or a malevolent king. He is put by his unfriendly host to various severe trials, in which it is hoped that he will perish. In each trial he is assisted by the daughter of his host. After achieving the adventures, he elopes with the girl, and is pursued by her father. The runaway pair throw various common objects behind them, which are changed into magical obstacles and check the pursuit of the father. The myth has various endings, usually happy, in various places. Another form of the narrative is known, in which the visitors to the home of the hostile being are not wooers of his daughter, but brothers of his wife.¹ The incidents of the flight, in this variant, are still of the same character. Finally, when the flight is that of a brother from his sister's malevolent ghost in Hades (Japan), or of two sisters from a cannibal mother or step-mother (Zulu and Samoyed), the events of the flight and the magical aids to escape remain little altered. We shall afterwards see that attempts have been made to interpret one of these narratives as a nature-myth; but the attempts seem unsuccessful. We are therefore at a loss to account for the wide diffusion of this tale, unless it has been transmitted slowly from people to people in the immense unknown prehistoric past of the human race.

Before comparing the various forms of the myth in its first shape—that which tells of the mortal lover and the giant's or wizard's daughter—let us give the

¹ *Primitive Culture*, i. 357: "The savage sees individual stars as animate beings, or combines star-groups into living celestial creatures, or limbs of them, or objects connected with them."

¹ This formula occurs among Bushmen and Eskimo (Bleek and Rink).

Scottish version of the story. This version was written down for me, many years ago, by an aged lady in Morayshire :—

NICHT NOUGHT NOTHING.

There once lived a king and a queen. They were long married and had no bairns ; but at last the queen had a bairn, when the king was away in far countries. The queen would not christen the bairn till the king came back, and she said : "We will just call him *Nicht Nought Nothing* until his father comes home." But it was long before he came home, and the boy had grown a nice little laddie. At length the king was on his way back ; but he had a big river to cross ; and there was a spate, and he could not get over the water. But a giant came up to him, and said : "If you will give me *Nicht Nought Nothing*, I will carry you over the water on my back." The king had never heard that his son was called *Nicht Nought Nothing*, and so he promised him. When the king got home again, he was very happy to see his wife again, and his young son. She told him that she had not given the child any name but *Nicht Nought Nothing*, until he should come home again himself. The poor king was in a terrible case. He said : "What have I done? I promised to give the giant who carried me over the river on his back *Nicht Nought Nothing*." The king and the queen were sad and sorry, but they said, "When the giant comes, we will give him the hen-wife's bairn ; he will never know the difference." The next day the giant came to claim the king's promise, and he sent for the hen-wife's bairn ; and the giant went away with the bairn on his back. He travelled till he came to a big stone, and there he sat down to rest. He said,

"Hidge Hodge, on my back. What time of day is it?"

The poor little bairn said, "It is the time that my mother, the hen-wife, takes up the eggs for the queen's breakfast."

The giant was very angry, and dashed the bairn on the stone and killed it.

The same adventure is repeated with the gardener's son.

Then the giant went back to the king's

house, and said he would destroy them all if they did not give him *Nicht Nought Nothing* this time. They had to do it ; and when he came to the big stone, the giant said, "What time of day is it?" *Nicht Nought Nothing* said, "It is the time that my father the king will be sitting down to supper." The giant said, "I've got the right ane noo" ; and took *Nicht Nought Nothing* to his own house, and brought him up till he was a man.

The giant had a bonny dochter, and she and the lad grew very fond of each other. The giant said one day to *Nicht Nought Nothing*, "I've work for you to-morrow. There is a stable seven miles long and seven miles broad, and it has not been cleaned for seven years, and you must clean it to-morrow, or I will have you for my supper."

The giant's dochter went out next morning with the lad's breakfast, and found him in a terrible state, for aye as he cleaned out a bit, it aye fell in again. The giant's dochter said she would help him, and she cried a' the beasts o' the field, and a' the fowls o' the air, and in a minute they a' came, and carried awa' everything that was in the stable, and made a' clean before the giant came home. He said, "Shame for the wit that helped you ; but I have a worse job for you to-morrow." Then he told *Nicht Nought Nothing* that there was a loch seven miles long, and seven miles deep, and seven miles broad, and he must drain it the next day, or else he would have him for supper. *Nicht Nought Nothing* began early next morning, and tried to lave the water with his pail, but the loch was never getting any less, and he did no ken what to do ; but the giant's dochter called on all the fish in the sea to come and drink the water, and very soon they drank it dry. When the giant saw the work done, he was in a rage, and said : "I've a worse job for you to-morrow. There is a tree seven miles high, and no branch on it, till you get to the top, and there is a nest ; and you must bring down the eggs without breaking one, or else I will have you for my supper." At first the giant's dochter did not know how to help *Nicht Nought Nothing* ; but she cut off first her fingers and then her toes, and made steps of them ; and he clamb the tree, and got all the eggs safe till he came to the bottom, and then one was broken. The

giant's dochter advised him to run away, and she would follow him. So he travelled until he came to a king's palace; and the king and queen took him in, and were very kind to him. The giant's dochter left her father's house, and he pursued her and was drowned. Then she came to the king's palace where Nicht Nought Nothing was. And she went up into a tree to watch for him. The gardener's dochter, going to draw water in the well, saw the shadow of the lady in the water, and thought it was herself, and said: "If I'm so bonny, if I'm so brave, do you send me to draw water?" The gardener's wife went out, and she said the same thing. Then the gardener went himself, and brought the lady from the tree, and led her in. And he told her that a stranger was to marry the king's dochter, and showed her the man—and it was Nicht Nought Nothing asleep in a chair. And she saw him, and cried to him: "Waken, waken, and speak to me!" But he would not waken, and syne she cried:

I cleaned the stable, I laved the loch, and
I clamb the tree,
And all for the love of thee,
And thou wilt not waken and speak to me.

The king and the queen heard this, and came to the bonny young lady, and she said:

"I canna get Nicht Nought Nothing to speak to me for all that I can do."

Then were they greatly astonished when she spoke of Nicht Nought Nothing, and asked where he was, and she said: "He that sits there in the chair." Then they ran to him and kissed him, and called him their own dear son; and he wakened, and told them all that the giant's dochter had done for him, and of all her kindness. Then they took her in their arms and kissed her, and said she should now be their dochter, for their son should marry her.

And they lived happy all their days.

In this variant of the story, which we may use as our text, it is to be noticed that a *lacuna* exists. The narrative of the flight omits to mention that the run-aways threw things behind them which became obstacles in the giant's way. One of these objects probably turned into a lake, in which the giant was

drowned.¹ A common incident is the throwing behind of a comb, which changes into a thicket. The formula of leaving obstacles behind occurs in the Indian collection, the *Kathasarit sagara* (vii., xxxix.). "The Battle of the Birds," in Campbell's *Tales of the West Highlands*, is a very copious Gaelic variant. Russian parallels are "Vasilissa the Wise and the Water King" and "The King Bear."² The incident of the flight and the magical obstacles is found in Japanese mythology.³ The "ugly woman of Hades" is sent to pursue the hero. He casts down his black head-dress, and it is instantly turned into grapes; he fled while she was eating them. Again, "he cast down his multitudinous and close-toothed comb, and it instantly turned into bamboo sprouts." In the Gaelic version the pursuer is detained by talkative objects which the pursued leave at home; and this marvel recurs in Zulu-land, and is found among the Bushmen. The Zulu versions are numerous.⁴ Oddly enough, in the last variant the girl performs no magic feat, but merely throws sesamum on the ground to delay the cannibals, for cannibals are very fond of sesamum.⁵

Here, then, we have the remarkable details of the flight, in Zulu, Gaelic, Norse, Malagasy,⁶ Russian, Italian, Japanese. Of all incidents in the myth, the incidents of the flight are most widely known. But the whole connected series of events—the coming of the wooer; the love of the hostile being's daughter; the tasks imposed on the wooer; the aid rendered by the

¹ The events of the flight are recorded correctly in the Gaelic variant, "The Battle of the Birds." (Campbell, *Tales of the West Highlands*, vol. i., p. 25.)

² Ralston, *Russian Folk Tales*, 132; Köhler, *Orient and Occident*, ii. 107, 114.

³ *Ko ti ki*, p. 36.

⁴ Callaway, pp. 51, 53, 64, 145, 228.

⁵ See also "Petrosinella" in the *Pentameron*, and "The Mastermaid" in Dasent's *Tales from the Norse*.

⁶ *Folklore Journal*, August, 1883.

daughter; the flight of the pair; the defeat or destruction of the hostile being—all these, or most of these, are extant, in due sequence, among the following races. The Greeks have the tale, the people of Madagascar have it, the Lowland Scotch, the Celts, the Russians, the Italians, the Algonquins, the Finns, and the Samoans have it. Now, if the story were confined to the Aryan race, we might account for its diffusion by supposing it to be the common heritage of the Indo-European peoples, carried everywhere with them in their wanderings. But when the tale is found in Madagascar, North America, Samoa, and among the Finns, while many scattered incidents occur in even more widely severed races, such as Zulus, Bushmen, Japanese, Eskimo, Samoyeds, the Aryan hypothesis becomes inadequate.

To show how closely, all things considered, the Aryan and non-Aryan possessors of the tale agree, let us first examine the myth of Jason.

The earliest literary reference to the myth of Jason is in the *Iliad* (vii. 467, xxii. 747). Here we read of Euneos, a son whom Hypsipyle bore to Jason in Lemnos. Already, even in the *Iliad*, the legend of Argo's voyage has been fitted into certain well-known geographical localities. A reference in the *Odyssey* (xii. 72) has a more antique ring: we are told that of all barques Argo alone escaped the jaws of the Rocks Wandering, which clashed together and destroyed ships. Argo escaped, it is said, "because Jason was dear to Hera." It is plain, from various fragmentary notices, that Hesiod was familiar with several of the adventures in the legend of Jason. In the *Theogony* (993-98) Hesiod mentions the essential facts of the legend: how Jason carried off from Æetes his daughter, "after achieving the adventures, many and grievous, which were laid upon him." At what period the home of Æetes was placed in Colchis it is not easy to determine. Mimnermus, a contemporary of Solon, makes

the home of Æetes lie "on the brink of ocean," a very vague description.¹ Pindar, on the other hand, in the splendid Fourth Pythian Ode, already knows Colchis as the scene of the loves and flight of Jason and Medea.

"Long were it for me to go by the beaten track," says Pindar, "and I know a certain short path." Like Pindar, we may abridge the tale of Jason. He seeks the golden fleece in Colchis: Æetes offers it to him as a prize for success in certain labours. By the aid of Medea, the daughter of Æetes, the wizard king, Jason tames the fire-breathing oxen, yokes them to the plough, and drives a furrow. By Medea's help he conquers the children of the teeth of the dragon, subdues the snake that guards the fleece of gold, and escapes, but is pursued by Æetes. To detain Æetes, Medea throws behind the mangled remains of her own brother, Apsyrtos, and the Colchians pursue no further than the scene of this bloody deed. The savagery of this act survives even in the work of a poet so late as Apollonius Rhodius (iv. 477), where we read how Jason performed a rite of savage magic, mutilating the body of Apsyrtos in a manner which was believed to appease the avenging ghost of the slain. "Thrice he tasted the blood, thrice spat it out between his teeth," a passage which the scholiast says contains the description of an archaic custom popular among murderers.

Beyond Tomi, where a popular etymology fixed the "cutting up" of Apsyrtos, we need not follow the fortunes of Jason and Medea. We have already seen the wooer come to the hostile being, win his daughter's love, achieve the adventures by her aid, and flee in her company, delaying by a horrible device the advance of her pursuers. To these incidents in the tale we confine our attention.

Many explanations of the Jason myth have been given by scholars who thought

¹ *Poetae Minores Gr.*, ii.

they recognised elemental phenomena in the characters. As usual, these explanations differ widely. Whenever a myth has to be interpreted, it is certain that one set of scholars will discover the sun and the dawn, where another set will see the thunder-cloud and lightning. The moon is thrown in at pleasure.

Preller¹ is a learned scholar, with his own set of etymologies. Jason is derived, he thinks, from *ἰάσμαι*, to heal, because Jason studied medicine under the Centaur Chiron. This is the view of the scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius (i. 554). Jason, to Preller's mind, is a form of Asclepius, "a spirit of the spring with its soft suns and fertile rains." Medea is the moon. Medea, on the other hand, is a lightning goddess, in the opinion of Schwartz.² No philological reason is offered.

We must suppose, it seems, that either the soft spring rains and the moon, or the dawn and the sun, or the lightning and the thunder-cloud, in one arrangement or another, irresistibly suggested, to early Aryan minds, the picture of a wooer, arriving in a hostile home, winning a maiden's love, achieving adventures by her aid, fleeing with her from her angry father and delaying his pursuit by various devices. Why the spring, the moon, the lightning, the dawn—any of them or all of them—should have suggested such a tale, let scholars determine when they have reconciled their own differences. It is more to our purpose to follow the myth among Samoans, Algonquins, and Finns. None of these races speak an Aryan language, and none can have been beguiled into telling the same sort of tale by a disease of Aryan speech.

Samoa, where we find our story, is the name of a group of volcanic islands in Central Polynesia. They are about 3,000 miles from Sydney, were first observed by Europeans in 1772, and are

as far removed as most spots from direct Aryan influences. Our position is, however, that in the shiftings and migrations of peoples the Jason tale has somehow been swept, like a piece of drift-wood, on to the coasts of Samoa. In the islands the tale has an epical form, and is chanted in a poem of twenty-six stanzas. There is something Greek in the free and happy life of the Samoans—something Greek, too, in this myth of theirs. There was once a youth, Siati, famous for his singing, a young Thamyris of Samoa. But as, according to Homer, "the Muses met Thamyris the Thracian, and made an end of his singing, for he boasted and said that he would vanquish even the Muses if he sang against them," so did the Samoan god of song envy Siati. The god and the mortal sang a match: the daughter of the god was to be the mortal's prize if he proved victorious. Siati won, and he set off, riding on a shark, as Arion rode the dolphin, to seek the home of the defeated deity. At length he reached the shores divine, and thither strayed Puapae, daughter of the god, looking for her comb which she had lost. "Siati," said she, "how comest thou hither?" "I am come to seek the song-god, and to wed his daughter." "My father," said the maiden, "is more a god than a man; eat nothing he hands you, never sit on a high seat, lest death follow." So they were united in marriage. But the god, like Æetes, was wroth, and began to set Siati upon perilous tasks: "Build me a house, and let it be finished this very day, else death and the oven await thee."³

Siati wept, but the god's daughter had the house built by the evening. The other adventures were to fight a fierce dog and to find a ring lost at sea. Just as the Scotch giant's daughter cut off her fingers to help her lover, so the Samoan god's daughter bade Siati cut her body into pieces and cast her into

¹ *Gr. My.*, ii. 318.

² *Sonne, Monde und Sterne*, pp. 213, 229.

³ This proves that the tale belongs to the pre-Christian cannibal age.

the sea. There she became a fish, and recovered the ring. They set off to the god's house, but met him pursuing them, with the help of his other daughter. "Puapae and Siati threw down the comb, and it became a bush of thorns in the way to intercept the god and Puanli," the other daughter. Next they threw down a bottle of earth, which became a mountain; "and then followed their bottle of water, and that became a sea, and drowned the god and Puanli."¹

This old Samoan song contains nearly the closest savage parallel to the various household tales which find their heroic and artistic shape in the Jason saga. Still more surprising in its resemblances is the Malagasy version of the narrative. In the Malagasy story the conclusion is almost identical with the winding up of the Scotch fairy tale. The girl hides in a tree; her face, seen reflected in a well, is mistaken by women for their own faces, and the recognition follows in due course.²

Like most Red Indian versions of popular tales, the Algonquin form of the Jason saga is strongly marked with the peculiarities of the race. The story is recognisable, and that is all.

The opening, as usual, differs from other openings. Two children are deserted in the wilderness, and grow up to manhood. One of them loses an arrow in the water; the elder brother, Panigwun, wades after it. A magical canoe flies past: an old magician, who is alone in the canoe, seizes Panigwun and carries him off. The canoe fleets along, like the barques of the Phæacians, at the will of the magician, and reaches the isle where, like the Samoan god of song, he dwells with his two daughters. "Here, my daughter," said he, "is a young man for your husband." But the daughter knew that the proposed husband was but another victim of the old man's

magic arts. By the daughter's advice, Panigwun escaped in the magic barque, consoled his brother, and returned to the island. Next day the magician, Mishosha, set the young man to hard tasks and perilous adventures. He was to gather gulls' eggs; but the gulls attacked him in dense crowds. By an incantation he subdued the birds, and made them carry him home to the island. Next day he was sent to gather pebbles, that he might be attacked and eaten by the king of the fishes. Once more the young man, like the Finnish Ilmarinen in Pohjola, subdued the mighty fish, and went back triumphant. The third adventure, as in "Nicht Nought Nothing," was to climb a tree of extraordinary height in search of a bird's nest. Here, again, the youth succeeded, and finally conspired with the daughters to slay the old magician. Lastly the boy turned the magician into a sycamore-tree, and won his daughter. The other daughter was given to the brother who had no share in the perils.¹ Here we miss the incident of the flight;² and the magician's daughter, though in love with the hero, does not aid him to perform the feats. Perhaps an Algonquin brave would scorn the assistance of a girl. In the *Kalevala* the old hero, Wäinämöinen, and his friend Ilmarinen, set off to the mysterious and hostile land of Pohjola to win a bride. The maiden of Pohjola loses her heart to Ilmarinen, and, by her aid, he bridles the wolf and bear, ploughs a field of adders with a plough of gold, and conquers the gigantic pike that swims in the Styx of Finnish mythology. After this point the story is interrupted by a long sequel of popular bridal songs, and, in the wandering course of the rather aimless epic, the flight and its incidents have been forgotten, or are neglected. These incidents recur, however, in

¹ Turner's *Samoa*, p. 102. In this tale only the names of the daughters are translated; they mean "white fish" and "dark fish."

² *Folklore Journal*, August, 1883.

¹ Schoolcraft, *Algie Researches*, ii. 94-104.

² The Red Indian version of the flight is given in "The Red Horse of the Dacotahs,"—*Century Magazine*, 1884.

the thread of somewhat different plots. We have seen that they are found in Japan, among the Eskimo, among the Bushmen, the Samoyeds, and the Zulus, as well as in Hungarian, Magyar, Celtic, and other European household tales.

The conclusion appears to be that the central part of the Jason myth is incapable of being explained either as a nature-myth or as a myth founded on a disease of language. So many languages could not take the same malady in the same way; nor can we imagine any series of natural phenomena that would inevitably suggest this tale to so many diverse races. We must suppose, therefore, either that all wits jumped and invented the same romantic series of situations by accident, or that all men spread from one centre, where the story was known, or that the story, once invented, has drifted all round the world. If the last theory be approved of, the tale will be like the Indian Ocean shell found lately in the Polish bone-cave,*

or like the Egyptian beads discovered in the soil of Dahomey. The story will have been carried hither and thither, in the remotest times, to the remotest shores, by traders, by slaves, by captives in war, or by women torn from their own tribe and forcibly settled as wives among alien peoples.

Stories of this kind are everywhere the natural property of mothers and grandmothers. When we remember how widely diffused is the law of exogamy, which forbids marriage between a man and woman of the same stock, we are impressed by the number of alien elements which must have been introduced with alien wives. Where husband and wife, as often happened, spoke different languages, the woman would inevitably bring the hearthside tales of her childhood among a people of strange speech. By all these agencies, working through dateless time, we may account for the diffusion, if we cannot explain the origin, of tales like the central arrangement of incidents in the career of Jason.

* *Nature*, March 14th, 1884.

IV.

APOLLO AND THE MOUSE

THE following essay is to be taken under all reserve. Since it was written we have learned much, from the excavations on ancient Greek and Cretan sites, as to the great civilisation, from 2500 to 1500 B.C., which preceded, on the shores and isles of the Ægean Sea, the new Achæan civilisation known to Homer. The diggings of Mr. Arthur Evans and his followers have proved that a civilisation, in many ways more akin to our own than any other, existed in these regions, and was in contact with that of Egypt. The

people wrote copiously; but, till their writing has been deciphered, we cannot know anything about their language. Scholars generally suppose that it was not Greek, and, among words surviving out of one of their tongues, are usually reckoned those ending in *inthos*, as *Araminthos* (a bath), *Curinthos*, and other place-names. Among these words is *Sminthos*, a shrew-mouse, and, if this be not originally Greek, the Greek religious associations of the shrew-mouse must have been introduced by the prior

Ægean race, perhaps from North Africa, among whom the ancestors of Homer's heroes settled. Homer never alluded to anything at all resembling totemism; in Homer are very few traces of survival of savage ideas. His poems were composed, as Mr. Arthur Evans agrees with me in holding, at the end of the last period of "Ægean" or "Minoan" civilisation, by a member of a race which had long spoken Greek, and which, at least as represented by its poet, had emancipated itself from savage ideas, as of human sacrifice, magic, and relics of totemism. There was a recrudescence of some of these things in the Greek poetry of the ninth and eighth centuries B.C. And henceforth they are conspicuous in Greek myths, ritual, literature, and temple legends. We cannot tell to what extent they were derived from the prior Ægean peoples, to what extent from the lower classes of the Achæans themselves; but they are usually ignored by the aristocratic poet, Homer. Unlike his successors, the Cyclic poets of the ninth and eighth centuries B.C., the Greek tragedians, and the Greeks in general, Homer knows nothing even of the worship of ancestral ghosts, and has no room for ghosts in his philosophy, except in the case of men whose dead bodies have not been duly cremated. And *they* are feeble phantasms: For these reasons it may well be doubted whether the traces of totemism in Greece are of Achæan origin. Moreover, the studies of Mannhardt, and of Mr. Frazer in *The Golden Bough*, suggest that many, at least, of the animals associated with Greek religion were vehicles or representatives of "the Corn spirit," or other spirits of vegetation, propitiated for purposes of securing fertility and good harvests.

WHY is Apollo, especially the Apollo of the Troad, he who showered the darts of pestilence among the Greeks, so constantly associated with a mouse? The very name, Smintheus, by which his

favourite priest calls on him in the *Iliad* (i. 39), might be rendered "Mouse Apollo," or "Apollo, Lord of Mice." As we shall see later, mice lived beneath the altar, and were fed in the holy of holies of the god, and an image of a mouse was placed beside or upon his sacred tripod. The ancients were puzzled by these things, and, as will be shown, accounted for them by "mouse-stories," *Σμινθιακοὶ λόγοι*, so styled by Eustathius, the mediæval interpreter of Homer. Following our usual method, let us ask whether similar phenomena occur elsewhere, in countries where they are intelligible. Did insignificant animals elsewhere receive worship: were their effigies elsewhere placed in the temples of a purer creed? We find answers in the history of Peruvian religion.

After the Spanish conquest of Peru, one of the European adventurers, Don Garcilasso de la Vega, married an Inca princess. Their son, also named Garcilasso, was born about 1540. His famous book, *Comentarios Reales*, contains the most authentic account of the old Peruvian beliefs. Garcilasso was learned in all the learning of the Europeans, and, as an Inca on the mother's side, had claims on the loyalty of the defeated race. He set himself diligently to collect both their priestly and popular traditions, and his account of them is the more trustworthy as it coincides with what we know to have been true in lands with which Garcilasso had little acquaintance.

To Garcilasso's mind, Peruvian religion seems to be divided into two periods—the age before and the age which followed the accession of the Incas, and their establishment of sun-worship as the creed of the State. In the earlier period, the pre-Inca period, he tells us, "an Indian was not accounted honourable unless he was descended from a fountain, river, or lake, or even from the sea, or from a wild animal, such as a bear, lion, tiger, eagle, or the bird they call *cuntur* (condor), or some other bird of

prey.”¹ To these worshipful creatures “men offered what they usually saw them eat” (i. 53). But men were not content to adore large and dangerous animals. “There was not an animal, how vile and filthy soever, that they did not worship as a god,” including “lizards, toads, and frogs.” In the midst of these superstitions the Incas appeared. Just as the tribes claimed descent from animals, great or small, so the Incas drew *their* pedigree from the sun, which they adored like the *gens* of the Aurelii in Rome.² Thus every Indian had his *pacarissa*, or, as the North American Indians say, *totem*,³ a natural object from which he claimed descent, and which, in a certain degree, he worshipped. Though sun-worship became the established religion, worship of the animal *pacarissas* was still tolerated. The sun-temples also contained *huacas*, or images, of the beasts which the Indians had venerated.⁴ In the great temple of Pachacamac, the most spiritual and abstract god of Peruvian faith, “they worshipped a she-fox and an emerald. The devil also appeared to them, and spoke in the form of a tiger, very fierce.”⁵ This toleration of an older and cruder, in subordination to a purer, faith is a very common feature in religious evolution. In Catholic countries, to this day, we may watch, in Holy Week, the Adonis feast described by Theocritus,⁶ and the procession and entombment of the old god of spring.

“The Incas had the good policy to collect all the tribal animal gods into

their temples in and round Cuzco, in which the two leading gods were the Master of Life and the Sun.” Did a process of this sort ever occur in Greek religion, and were older animal gods ever collected into the temples of such deities as Apollo?

While a great deal of scattered evidence about many animals consecrated to Greek gods points in this direction, it will be enough, for the present, to examine the case of the Sacred Mice. Among races which are still in the totemistic stage, which still claim descent from animals and from other objects, a peculiar marriage law generally exists, or can be shown to have existed. No man may marry a woman who is descended from the same ancestral animal, and who bears the same totem-name, and carries the same badge or family crest, as himself. A man descended from the Crane, and whose family name is Crane, cannot marry a woman whose family name is Crane. He must marry a woman of the Wolf, or Turtle, or Swan, or other name, and her children keep her family title, not his. Thus, if a Crane man marries a Swan woman, the children are Swans, and none of them may marry a Swan; they must marry Turtles, Wolves, or what not, and *their* children, again, are Turtles or Wolves. Thus there is necessarily an eternal come and go of all the animal names known in a district. As civilisation advances these rules grow obsolete. People take their names from the father, as among ourselves. Finally, the dwellers in a given district, having become united into a local tribe, are apt to drop the various animal titles, and to adopt, as the name of the whole tribe, the name of the chief, or of the predominating family. Let us imagine a district of some twenty miles, in which there are Crane, Wolf, Turtle, and Swan families. Long residence together, and common interests, have welded them into a local tribe. The chief is of the Wolf family, and the tribe, sinking family differences

¹ *Com. Real.*, i. 75.

² See *Early History of the Family*, *infra*.

³ The names *Toten* and *Totenism* have been in use at least since 1702, among writers on the North American tribes. Prof. Max Müller (*Academy*, Jan., 1884) says the word should be, not *Toten*, but *Ote* or *Otem*. Mr. Tylor's inquiries among the Red Men support this. Long, an interpreter among the Indians, introduced the word *Totamism* in 1792; but Laftau (1724) had already explained some classical myths as survivals of Totemism.

⁴ Christoval de Moluna (1570), p. 5.

⁵ Cieza de Leon, p. 183.

⁶ *Idyll* xv.

and family names, calls itself "the Wolves." Such tribes were probably, in the beginning, the inhabitants of the various Egyptian towns which severally worshipped the wolf, or the sheep, or the crocodile, and abstained religiously (except on certain sacrificial occasions) from the flesh of the animal that gave them its name.¹

It has taken us long to reach the Sacred Mice of Greek religion, but we are now in a position to approach their august divinity. We have seen that the sun-worship superseded, without abolishing, the tribal *pacarissas* in Peru, and that the *huacas*, or images, of the sacred animals were admitted under the roof of the temple of the Sun. Now it is recognised that the temples of the Sminthian Apollo contained images of sacred mice among other animals, and our argument is that here, perhaps, we have another example of the Peruvian religious evolution. Just as, in Peru, the tribes adored "vile and filthy" animals, just as the solar worship of the Incas subordinated these, just as the *huacas* of the beasts remained in the temples of the Peruvian Sun; so, we suggest, the tribes along the Mediterranean coasts had, at some very remote prehistoric period, their animal *pacarissas*: these were subordinated to the religion (to some extent solar) of Apollo; and the *huacas*, or animal idols, survived in Apollo's temples.

If this theory be correct, we shall probably find the mouse, for example, revered as a sacred animal in many places. This would necessarily follow, if the marriage customs which we have described ever prevailed on Greek soil, and scattered the mouse-name far and wide.²

¹ Sayce, *Herodotus*, p. 344; Herodotus, ii. 42; Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians* (1878, ii. 475, note 2); Plutarch, *De Is. et Os.*, 71, 72; Athenæus, vii. 299; Strabo, xvii. 813.

² The mouse, according to Dalton, is still a totem among the Oraons of Bengal. A man of the Mouse "motherhood," as the totem kindred is locally styled, may not eat mice (esteemed a delicacy), nor marry a girl who is a Mouse.

Traces of the Mouse kins, and of adoration, if adoration there was, of the mouse, would linger on in the following shapes: (1) Places would be named from mice, and mice would be actually held sacred in themselves. (2) The mouse-name would be given locally to the god who superseded the mouse. (3) The figure of the mouse would be associated with the god, and used as a badge, or a kind of crest, or local mark, in places where the mouse had been a venerated animal. (4) Finally, myths would be told to account for the sacredness of a creature so undignified.

Let us take these considerations in their order:—

(1) If there were local mice tribes, deriving their name from the worshipful mouse, certain towns settled by these tribes would retain a reverence for mice.

In Chrysa, a town of the Troad, according to Heraclides Ponticus, mice were held sacred, the local name for shrew-mouse being *σμίνθος*. Many places bore this mouse-name, according to Strabo.³ This is precisely what would have occurred had the Mouse totem and the Mouse stock been widely distributed.² The scholiast³ mentions Sminthus as a place in the Troad. Strabo speaks of two places deriving their name from Sminthus, or mouse, near the Sminthian temple, and others near Larissa. In Rhodes and Lindus, the mouse place-name recurs, "and in many other districts" (*Καὶ ἀλλόθι δὲ πολλὰ χόθι*). Strabo (x. 486) names Caressus, and Poessa, in Ceos, among the other places which had Sminthian temples, and, presumably, were once centres of tribes named after the mouse.

Here, then, are a number of localities in which the Mouse Apollo was adored, and where the old mouse-name lingered. That the mice were actually held sacred in their proper persons we learn from

³ xiii. 604. Casaub., 1620.

² There were Sminthiac feasts at Rhodes, Gela, Lesbos, and Crete (De Witte, *Revue Numismatique*, N.S. iii. 3-11).

³ *Iliad* i. 39.

Ælian. "The dwellers in Hamaxitus of the Troad worship mice," says Ælian. "In the temple of Apollo Smintheus mice are nourished, and food is offered to them at the public expense, and white mice dwell beneath the altar."¹ In the same way we found that the Peruvians fed their sacred beasts on what they usually saw them eat.

(2) The second point in our argument has already been sufficiently demonstrated. The mouse-name "Smintheus" was given to Apollo in all the places mentioned by Strabo, "and many others."

(3) The figure of the mouse will be associated with the god, and used as a badge, or crest, or local mark, in places where the mouse has been a venerated animal.

The passage already quoted from Ælian informs us that there stood "an effigy of the mouse beside the tripod of Apollo." In Chrysa, according to Strabo (xiii. 604), the statue of Apollo Smintheus had a mouse beneath his foot. The mouse on the tripod of Apollo is represented on a bas-relief illustrating the plague, and the offerings of the Greeks to Apollo Smintheus, as described in the first book of the *Iliad*.²

The mouse is not an uncommon local badge or crest in Greece. The animals whose figures are stamped on coins, like the Athenian owl, are the most ancient marks of cities. It is a plausible conjecture that, just as the Iroquois when they signed treaties with the Europeans used their totems—bear, wolf, and turtle—as seals,³ so the animals on archaic Greek city coins represented crests or

badges which, at some far more remote period, had been totems.

The Argives, according to Pollux,⁴ stamped the mouse on their coins.² As there was a temple of Apollo Smintheus in Tenedos, we naturally hear of a mouse on the coins of the island.³ Golzio has published one of these mouse coins. The people of Metapontum stamped their money with a mouse gnawing an ear of corn. The people of Cumæ employed a mouse dormant. Paoli fancied that certain mice on Roman medals might be connected with the family of *Mus*, but this is rather guess-work.⁴

We have now shown traces, at least, of various ways in which an early tribal religion of the mouse—the mouse *pacarrissa*, as the Peruvians said—may have been perpetuated. When we consider that the superseding of the mouse by Apollo must have occurred, if it did occur, long before Homer, we may rather wonder that the mouse left his mark on Greek religion so long. We have seen mice revered, a god with a mouse-name, the mouse-name recurring in many places, the *huaca*, or idol of the mouse, preserved in the temples of the god, and the mouse-badges used in several widely severed localities. It remains (4) to examine the myths about mice. These, in our opinion, were probably told to account for the presence of the *huaca* of the mouse in temples, and for the occurrence of the animal in religion, and his connection with Apollo.

A singular mouse-myth, narrated by Herodotus, is worth examining for reasons which will appear later, though

¹ Ælian, *H. A.*, xii. 5.

² The bas-relief is published in Paoli's *Della Religione de' Gentili*, Naples, 1771, p. 9; also by Fabretti, *ad cal. Oper. de Colum. Trajan.*, p. 315. Paoli's book was written after the discovery in Neapolitan territory of a small bronze image, hieratic in character, representing a man with a mouse on his hand. Paoli's engraving of this work of art, unluckily, does not enable us to determine its date or *provenance*. The book is a mine of mouse-lore.

³ Colden, *History of the Five Nations*, p. 15 (1727).

⁴ *Onomast.*, ix. segm. 84.

² De Witte says Pollux was mistaken here. In the *Revue Numismatique*, N.S. iii., De Witte publishes coins of Alexandria, the more ancient Hamaxitus, in the Troad. The Sminthian Apollo is represented with his bow, and the mouse on his hand. Other coins show the god with the mouse at his foot, or show us the lyre of Apollo supported by mice. A bronze coin in the British Museum gives Apollo with the mouse beside his foot.

³ Spanheim, *ad Fl. Joseph.*, vi. 1, p. 312.

⁴ *Della Rel.*, p. 174.

the events are said to have happened on Egyptian soil.¹ According to Herodotus, one Sethos, a priest of Hephæstus (Ptah), was king of Egypt. He had disgraced the military class, and he found himself without an army when Sennacherib invaded his country. Sethos fell asleep in the temple, and the god, appearing to him in a vision, told him that divine succour would come to the Egyptians.² In the night before the battle field-mice gnawed the quivers and shield-handles of the foe, who fled on finding themselves thus disarmed. "And now," says Herodotus, "there standeth a stone image of this king in the temple of Hephæstus, and in the hand of the image a mouse, and there is this inscription: 'Let whoso looketh on me be pious.'"

Professor Sayce³ holds that there was no such person as Sethos, but that the legend "is evidently Egyptian, not Greek, and the name of Sennacherib, as well as the fact of the Assyrian attack, is correct." The legend also, though Egyptian, is "an echo of the Biblical account of the destruction of the Assyrian army," an account which omits the mice. "As to the mice, here," says Professor Sayce, "we have to do again with the Greek dragomen (*sic*). The story of Sethos was attached to the statue of some deity which was supposed to hold a mouse in its hand." It must have been easy to verify this supposition; but Mr. Sayce adds, "mice were not sacred in Egypt, nor were they used as symbols, or found on the monuments." To this remark we may suggest some exceptions.

Apparently this one mouse *was* found on the monuments. Wilkinson (iii. 264) says mice do occur in the sculptures, but they were not sacred. Rats, however, were certainly sacred, and as little distinction is taken, in myth, between rats and mice as between rabbits and hares. The rat was sacred to Ra, the Sun-god, and (like all totems) was not to be eaten.⁴ This association of the rat and the Sun cannot but remind us of Apollo and his mouse. According to Strabo, a certain city of Egypt did worship the shrew-mouse. The Athribitæ, or dwellers in Crocodilopolis, are the people to whom he attributes this cult, which he mentions (xvii. 831) among the other local animal-worships of Egypt.⁵ Several porcelain examples of the field-mouse sacred to Horus (commonly called Apollo by the Greeks) may be seen in the British Museum.

That rats and field-mice were sacred in Egypt, then, we may believe on the evidence of the Ritual, of Strabo, and of many relics of Egyptian art. Herodotus, moreover, is credited when he says that the statue "had a mouse on its hand." Elsewhere it is certain that the story of the mice gnawing the bowstrings occurs frequently as an explanation of mouse-worship. One of the Trojan "mouse-stories" ran—that emigrants had set out in prehistoric times from Crete. The oracle advised them to settle "wherever they were attacked by the children of the soil." At Hamaxitus in the Troad they were assailed in the night by mice, which ate all that was edible of their

¹ Herodotus, ii. 141.

² Liebrecht (*Zur Volkskunde*, p. 13, quoting *Journal Asiatique*, 1st series, 3, 307) finds the same myth in Chinese annals. It is not a god, however, but the king of the rats who appears to the distressed monarch in his dream. Rats then gnaw the bowstrings of his enemies. The invaders were Turks, the rescued prince a king of Khotan. The king raised a temple, and offered sacrifice—to the rats? The same story of rats gnawing bowstrings recurs, of all places, in the *Migration Legend of the Greeks* (Brinton, Philadelphia; 1884).

³ *Herodotus*, p. 204.

⁴ Wilkinson, iii. 249, quoting the Ritual xxxiii.: "Thou devoteest the abominable rat of Ra, or the Sun."

⁵ Mr. Loftie has kindly shown me a green mouse containing the throne-name of Thothmes III. The animals thus used as substitutes for scarabs were also sacred, as the fish, rhinoceros, fly, all represented in Mr. Loftie's collection. See his *Essay of Scarabs*, p. 27. It may be admitted that, in a country where Cats were gods, the religion of the Mouse must have been struggling and oppressed.



armour and bowstrings. The colonists made up their mind that these mice were "the children of the soil," settled there, and adored the mouse Apollo.¹ A myth of this sort may either be a story invented to explain the mouse-name; or a Mouse tribe, like the Red Indian Wolves, or Crows, may actually have been settled on the spot, and may even have resisted invasion.² Another myth of the Troad accounted for the worship of the mouse Apollo on the hypothesis that he had once freed the land from mice, like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, whose pipe (still serviceable) is said to have been found in his grave by men who were digging a mine.³

Stories like these, stories attributing some great deliverance to the mouse, or some deliverance from mice to the god, would naturally spring up among people puzzled by their own worship of the mouse-god or of the mouse. We have explained the religious character of mice as the relics of a past age in which the mouse had been a totem and mouse family names had been widely diffused. That there are, and have been, mice totems and mouse family names among Semitic stocks round the Mediterranean is proved by Professor Robertson Smith:⁴ "Achbor, the mouse, is an Edomite name, apparently a stock name, as the jerboa and another mouse-name are among the Arabs. The same name occurs in Judah." Where totemism exists the members of each stock either do not (a rule with exceptions) eat the ancestral animal at all, or only eat him on rare solemn occasions. The totem of a hostile stock may be eaten by way of insult. In the case of the mouse, Isaiah seems to refer to one or other of these practices (lxvi.): "They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and

the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord." This is like the Egyptian prohibition to eat "the abominable" (that is, tabooed or forbidden) "Rat of Ra." If the unclean animals of Israel were originally the totems of each clan, then the mouse was a totem,¹ for the chosen people were forbidden to eat "the weasel, and the mouse, and the tortoise after his kind." That unclean beasts, beasts not to be eaten, were originally totems, Professor Robertson Smith infers from Ezekiel (viii. 10, 11), where "we find seventy of the elders of Israel—that is, the heads of houses—worshipping in a chamber which had on its walls the figures of all manner of unclean [tabooed] creeping things, and quadrupeds, *even all the idols of the house of Israel.*" Some have too hastily concluded that the mouse was a sacred animal among the neighbouring Philistines. After the Philistines had captured the Ark and set it in the house of Dagon, the people were smitten with "emerods." They therefore, in accordance with a well-known savage magical practice, made five golden representations of these "plague-buboes," and five golden mice, as "a trespass offering to the Lord of Israel," and so restored the Ark.² Such votive offerings are common still in Catholic countries, and the mice of gold by no means prove that the Philistines had ever worshipped mice (see Introduction, p. 4).

Turning to India from the Mediterranean basin, and the Aryan, Semitic, and Egyptian tribes on its coasts, we find that the mouse was the sacred animal of Rudra. "The mouse, Rudra, is thy beast," says the Yajur Veda, as rendered by Grohmann in his *Apollo Smintheus*. Grohmann recognises in Rudra a deity with most of the characteristics of Apollo. In later Indian mythology, the mouse is an attribute of Ganeça, who, like Apollo Smintheus, is represented in art with his foot upon a mouse.

¹ Strabo, xiii. 604.

² Eustathius on *Iliad*, i. 39.

³ *A Strange and True Relation of the Prodigious Multitude of Mice*, 1670.

⁴ *Journal of Philol.*, xvii. p. 96.

¹ Leviticus xi. 29.

² 1 Samuel 5, 6.

Such are the chief appearances of the mouse in ancient religion. If he really was a Semitic totem, it may, perhaps, be argued that his prevalence in connection with Apollo is the result of a Semitic or Ægean leaven in Hellenism. Hellenic invaders may have found Semitic or Ægean mouse-kins at home, and incorporated the alien stock deity with their own Apollo-worship. In that case the mouse, while still originally a totem, would not be an Aryan totem. But probably the myths and rites of the mouse, and their diffusion, are more plausibly explained on our theory than on that of De Gubernatis: "The Pagan Sun-god crushes under his foot the Mouse of Night. When the cat's away, the mice may play; the shadows of night dance when the moon is absent."¹ This is one of the quaintest pieces of mythological logic. Obviously, when the cat (the moon) is away, the mice (the shadows) *cannot* play: there is no light to produce a shadow. As usually chances, the scholars who try to resolve all the features of myth into physical phenomena do not agree among themselves about the mouse. While the mouse is the night according to M. De Gubernatis, in Grohmann's opinion the mouse is the lightning. He argues that the lightning was originally regarded by the Aryan race as the "flashing tooth of a beast," especially of a mouse. Afterwards men came to identify the beast with his teeth, and behold, the lightning and the mouse are convertible mythical terms! Now it is perfectly true that savages regard many elemental phenomena, from eclipses to the rainbow, as the result of the action of animals. The rainbow is a serpent;² thunder is caused by the thunder-bird, who has actually been shot in Dacotah, and who is familiar to the Zulus; while rain is the milk of a heavenly cow—an idea recurring in the *Zend Avesta*. But it does not follow because savages believe in

these meteorological beasts that all the beasts in myth were originally meteorological. Man raised a serpent to the skies, perhaps, but his interest in the animal began on earth, not in the clouds. It is excessively improbable, and quite unproved, that any race ever regarded lightning as the flashes of a mouse's teeth. The hypothesis is a *jeu d'esprit*, like the opposite hypothesis about the mouse of Night. In these, and all the other current theories of the Sminthian Apollo, the widely diffused worship of ordinary mice, and such small deer, has been either wholly neglected or explained by the first theory of symbolism that occurred to the conjecture of a civilised observer. The facts of savage animal-worship, and their relations to totemism, were long unknown to, or unappreciated by, scholars, with the exception of Mr. Sayce, who recognised totemism as the origin of the zoomorphic element in Egyptian religion.

Our explanation, whether adequate or not, is not founded on an isolated case. If Apollo superseded and absorbed the worship of the mouse, he did no less for the wolf, the ram, the dolphin, and several other animals whose images were associated with his own. The Greek religion was more refined and anthropomorphic than that of Egypt. In Egypt the animals were still adored, and the images of the gods had bestial heads. In Greece only a few gods, and chiefly in very archaic statues, had bestial heads; but beside the other deities the sculptor set the owl, eagle, wolf, serpent, tortoise, mouse, or whatever creature was the local favourite of the deity.¹ Probably the deity had, in the majority of cases, superseded the animal and succeeded to his honours. But the conservative religious sentiment retained the beast within the courts and in the suit and service of the anthropomorphic god.²

¹ *De Iside et Osiride*, lxxvi.

² This hypothesis does not maintain that totemism prevailed in Greece during historic times. Though Plutarch mentions a Carian *γέρος*, the Ioxidæ, of Attic descent, which

¹ *Zool. Myth.*, ii. 68.

² *Méhusine*, N.S. i.

The process by which the god ousted the beasts may, perhaps, be observed in Samoa. There (as Dr. Turner tells us in his *Samoa*) each family has its own sacred animal, which it may not eat. If this law be transgressed, the malefactor is supernaturally punished in a variety of ways. But, while each family has thus its animal, four or five different families recognise, in owl, crab, lizard, and so on, incarnations of the same god, say of Tongo. If Tongo had a temple among these families, we can readily believe that images of the various beasts in which he was incarnate would be kept within the consecrated walls. Savage ideas like these, if they were ever entertained in Greece, would account for the holy animals of the different deities. But it is obvious that the phenomena which we have been studying may be otherwise explained. It may be said that the Sminthian Apollo was only

revered as the enemy and opponent of mice. St. Gertrude (whose heart was eaten by mice) has the same rôle in France.¹ The worship of Apollo, and the badge of the mouse, would, on this principle, be diffused by colonies from some centre of the faith. The images of mice in Apollo's temples would be nothing more than votive offerings. Thus, in the church of a Saxon town, the verger shows a silver mouse dedicated to Our Lady. "This is the greatest of our treasures," says the verger. "Our town was overrun with mice till the ladies of the city offered this mouse of silver. Instantly all the mice disappeared." "And are you such fools as to believe that the creatures went away because a silver mouse was dedicated?" asked a Prussian officer. "No," replied the verger, rather neatly, "or long ago we should have offered a silver Prussian."

revered asparagus, it is probable that genuine totemism had died out of Greece many hundreds of years before even Homer's time. But this view is not inconsistent with the existence of survivals in religion and ritual.

¹ Rolland, *Faune populaire*.

V.

STAR-MYTHS

ARTEMUS WARD used to say that, while there were many things in the science of astronomy hard to be understood, there was one fact which entirely puzzled him. He could partly perceive how we "weigh the sun," and ascertain the component elements of the heavenly bodies, by the aid of spectrum analysis. "But what beats me about the stars," he observed plaintively, "is how we come to know their names." This question, or rather the somewhat similar question, "How did the constellations come by their

very peculiar names?" has puzzled Professor Pritchard and other astronomers more serious than Artemus Ward. Why is a group of stars called the *Bear*, or the *Swan*, or the *Twins*, or named after the *Pleiades*, the fair daughters of the Giant Atlas?¹ These are difficulties that meet even children when they examine a "celestial globe." There

¹ The attempt is not to explain the origin of each separate name, but only of the general habit of giving animal or human names to stars.

they find the figure of a bear, traced out with lines in the intervals between the stars of the constellations, while a very imposing giant is so drawn that Orion's belt just fits his waist. But when he comes to look at the heavens, the infant speculator sees no sort of likeness to a bear in the stars, nor anything at all resembling a giant in the neighbourhood of Orion. The most eccentric modern fancy, which can detect what shapes it will in clouds, is unable to find any likeness to human or animal forms in the stars; and yet we call a great many of the stars by the names of men and beasts and gods. Some resemblance to terrestrial things, it is true, everyone can behold in the heavens. *Corona*, for example, is like a crown, or, as the Australian black fellows know, it is like a boomerang, and we can understand why they give it the name of that curious curved missile. The *Milky Way*, again, does resemble a path in the sky; our English ancestors called it *Watling Street*—the path of the Watlings, mythical giants—and Bushmen in Africa and Red Men in North America name it the "ashen path" or "the path of souls." The ashes of the path, of course, are supposed to be hot and glowing, not dead and black like the ash-paths of modern running-grounds. Other and more recent names for certain constellations are also intelligible. In Homer's time the Greeks had two names for the *Great Bear*; they called it the *Bear*, or the *Wain*. and a certain fanciful likeness to a wain may be made out, though no resemblance to a bear is manifest. In the United States the same constellation is popularly styled the *Dipper*, and everyone may observe the likeness to a dipper or toddy-ladle.

But these resemblances take us only a little way towards appellations. We know that we derive many of the names straight from the Greek; but whence did the Greeks get them? Some, it is said, from the Chaldæans; but whence did they reach the Chaldæans? To this we shall return later; but, as to early

Greek star-lore, Goguet, the author of *L'Origine des Lois*, a rather learned but too speculative work of the last century, makes the following characteristic remarks: "The Greeks received their astronomy from Prometheus. This prince, as far as history teaches us, made his observations on Mount Caucasus." That was the eighteenth century's method of interpreting mythology. The myth preserved in the *Prometheus Bound* of Æschylus tells us that Zeus crucified the Titan on Mount Caucasus. The French philosopher, rejecting the supernatural elements of the tale, makes up his mind that Prometheus was a prince of a scientific bent, and that he established his observatory on the frosty Caucasus. But, even admitting this, why did Prometheus give the stars animal names? Goguet easily explains this by a hypothetical account of the manners of primitive men. "The earliest peoples," he says, "must have used writing for purposes of astronomical science. They would be content to design the constellations of which they wished to speak by the hieroglyphical symbols of their names; hence the constellations have insensibly taken the names of the chief symbols." Thus, a drawing of a bear or a swan was the hieroglyphic of the name of a star, or group of stars. But whence came the name which was represented by the hieroglyphic? That is precisely what our author forgets to tell us. But he remarks that the meaning of the hieroglyphic came to be forgotten, and "the symbols gave rise to all the ridiculous tales about the heavenly signs." This explanation is attained by the process of reasoning in a vicious circle from hypothetical premises ascertained to be false. All the known savages of the world, even those which have scarcely the elements of picture-writing, call the constellations by the names of men and animals, and all tell "ridiculous tales" to account for the names.

As the star-stories told by the Greeks, the ancient Egyptians, and other

civilised peoples of the old world, exactly correspond in character, and sometimes even in incident, with the star-stories of modern savages, we have the choice of three hypotheses to explain this curious coincidence. Perhaps the star-stories, about nymphs changed into bears, and bears changed into stars, were invented by the civilised races of old, and gradually found their way amongst people like the Eskimo, and the Australians, and Bushmen. Or it may be insisted that the ancestors of Australians, Eskimo, and Bushmen were once civilised like the Greeks and Egyptians, and invented star-stories, still remembered by their degenerate descendants. These are the two forms of the explanation which will be advanced by persons who believe that the star-stories were originally the fruit of the civilised imagination. The third theory would be that the "ridiculous tales" about the stars were originally the work of the savage imagination, and that the Greeks, Chaldeans, and Egyptians, when they became civilised, retained the old myths that their ancestors had invented when they were savages. In favour of this theory it may be said, briefly, that there is no proof that the fathers of Australians, Eskimo, and Bushmen had ever been civilised; while there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that the fathers of the Greeks had once been savages.¹ And, if we incline to the theory that the star-myths are the creation of savage fancy, we at once learn why they are, in all parts of the world, so much alike. Just as the flint and bone weapons of rude races resemble each other much more than they resemble the metal weapons and the artillery of advanced peoples, so the mental products, the fairy-tales and myths, of rude races have everywhere a strong family resemblance. They are produced by men in similar

mental conditions of ignorance, curiosity, and credulous fancy, and they are intended to supply the same needs, partly of amusing narrative, partly of crude explanation of familiar phenomena.

Now it is time to prove the truth of our assertion that the star-stories of savage and of civilised races closely resemble each other. Let us begin with that well-known group the *Pleiades*. The peculiarity of the *Pleiades* is that the group consists of seven stars, of which one is so dim that it seems entirely to disappear, and many persons can only detect its presence through a telescope. The Greeks had a myth to account for the vanishing of the lost Pleiad. The tale is given in the *Catasterismoi* (stories of metamorphoses into stars), attributed to Eratosthenes. This work was probably written after our era; but the author derived his information from older treatises now lost. According to the Greek myth, then, the seven stars of the *Pleiad* were seven maidens, daughters of the Giant Atlas. Six of them had gods for lovers; Poseidon admired two of them, Zeus three, and Ares one; but the seventh had only an earthly wooer, and when all of them were changed into stars the maiden with the mortal lover hid her light for shame.

Now let us compare the Australian story. According to Mr. Dawson (*Australian Aborigines*), a writer who understands the natives well, "their knowledge of the heavenly bodies greatly exceeds that of most white people," and "is taught by men selected for their intelligence and information. The knowledge is important to the aborigines on their night journeys"; so we may be sure that the natives are careful observers of the heavens, and are likely to be conservative of their astronomical myths. The "Lost Pleiad" has not escaped them, and this is how they account for her disappearance. The *Pirt Kopan noot* tribe have a tradition that the *Pleiades* were a queen and her six attendants. Long ago the *Crow* (our *Canopus*) fell in love with the

¹ Mr. Herbert Spencer believes that the Australians were once more civilised than at present. But there has never been found a trace of pottery on the Australian continent, which says little for their civilisation in the past.

queen, who refused to be his wife. The *Crow* found that the queen and her six maidens, like other Australian *gins*, were in the habit of hunting for white edible grubs in the bark of trees. The *Crow* at once changed himself into a grub (just as Jupiter and Indra used to change into swans, horses, ants, or what not) and hid in the bark of a tree. The six maidens sought to pick him out with their wooden hooks, but he broke the points of all the hooks. Then came the queen with her pretty bone hook; he let himself be drawn out, took the shape of a giant, and ran away with her. Ever since there have only been six stars—the six maidens—in the *Pleiad*. This story is well known, by the strictest inquiry, to be current among the blacks of the West District and South Australia.

Mr. Tylor, whose opinion is entitled to the highest respect, thinks that this may be a European myth, told by some settler to a black in the Greek form, and then spread about among the natives. He complains that the story of the loss of the *brightest* star does not fit the facts of the case.

We do not know, and how can the Australians know, that the lost star was once the brightest? It appears to me that the Australians, remarking the disappearance of a star, might very naturally suppose that the *Crow* had selected for his wife that one which had been the most brilliant of the cluster. Besides, the wide distribution of the tale among the natives, and the very great change in the nature of the incidents, seem to point to a native origin. Though the main conception—the loss of one out of seven maidens—is identical in Greek and in *Murri*, the manner of the disappearance is eminently Hellenic in the one case, eminently savage in the other. However this may be, nothing, of course, is proved by a single example. Let us next examine the stars *Castor* and *Pollux*. Both in Greece and in Australia these are said once to have been two young men. In the *Catasterismoi*, already spoken of, we read: "The *Twins*,

or *Dioscouri*—They were nutured in Lacedæmon, and were famous for their brotherly love, wherefore Zeus, desiring to make their memory immortal, placed them both among the stars." In Australia, according to Mr. Brough Smyth (*Aborigines of Victoria*), *Turree* (*Castor*) and *Wanjel* (*Pollux*) are two young men who pursue *Purra* and kill him at the commencement of the great heat. *Cooner toorung* (the mirage) is the smoke of the fire by which they roast him. In Greece it was not *Castor* and *Pollux*, but *Orion*, who was the great hunter placed among the stars. Among the Bushmen of South Africa, *Castor* and *Pollux* are not young men, but young women, the wives of the Eland, the great native antelope. In Greek star-stories the *Great Bear* keeps watch, Homer says, on the hunter Orion for fear of a sudden attack. But how did the Bear get its name in Greece? According to Hesiod, the oldest Greek poet after Homer, the Bear was once a lady, daughter of Lycaon, King of Arcadia. She was a nymph of the train of chaste Artemis, but yielded to the love of Zeus, and became the ancestress of all the Arcadians. Changed by Zeus to a bestial form, she was shot by Artemis, and then translated by Zeus to the stars (Apollod., iii. 8; Eustath., i. 156; Bachofen, *Der Bär*, p. 14).¹ Here we must notice, first, that the Arcadians, like Australians, Red Indians, and other wild races, and like the Bedouins, believed themselves to be descended from a girl who became an animal. That the early Egyptians did the same is not improbable; for names of animals are found among the ancestors in the very oldest genealogical papyrus,² as in the genealogies of the old English kings. Next the

¹ See C. O. Müller (*Prolog. zur Mythol.*, Engl. transl., p. 17): "Callisto is just nothing else than Artemis and her sacred animal comprehended in one idea." See also pp. 201-4. Müller (C. O.) very nearly made the discovery that the gods of Greece may, in some cases, have bestial connections.

² Brugsch, *History of Egypt*, i. 32.

Arcadians transferred the ancestral bear to the heavens, and in doing this they resembled the Peruvians, of whom Acosta says: "They adored the star *Urchuchilly*, feigning it to be a *Ram*, and worshipped two others, and say that one of them is a *sheep*, and the other a *lamb*.....others worshipped the star called the *Tiger*. *They were of opinion that there was not any beast or bird upon the earth, whose shape or image did not shine in the heavens.*"

But to return to our bears. The Australians have, properly speaking, no bears, though the animal called the native bear is looked up to by the aborigines with superstitious regard. But among the North American Indians, as the old missionaries, Lafitau and Charlevoix, observed, "the four stars in front of our constellation are a bear; those in the tail are hunters who pursue him; the small star apart is the pot in which they mean to cook him."

It may be held that the Red Men derived their bear from the European settlers. But, as we have seen, an exact knowledge of the stars has always been useful, if not essential, to savages; and we venture to doubt whether they would confuse their nomenclature and sacred traditions by borrowing terms from trappers and squatters. But, if this is improbable, it seems almost impossible that all savage races should have borrowed their whole conception of the heavenly bodies from the myths of Greece. It is thus that Egede, a missionary of the last century, describes the Eskimo philosophy of the stars: "The notions that the Greenlanders have as to the origin of the heavenly lights—as sun, moon, and stars—are very nonsensical; in that they pretend they have formerly been as many of their own ancestors, who, on different accounts, were lifted up to heaven, and became such glorious celestial bodies." Again, he writes: "Their notions about the stars are that some of them have been men, and others different sorts of animals and fishes." But every reader of Ovid

knows that this was the very mythical theory of the Greeks and Romans. The Egyptians, again, worshipped Osiris, Isis, and the rest as *ancestors*; and there are even modern scholars, like Mr. Loftie in his *Essay of Scarabs*, who hold Osiris to have been originally a real historical person. But the Egyptian priests who showed Plutarch the grave of Osiris showed him, too, the stars into which Osiris, Isis, and Horus had been metamorphosed. Here, then, we have Greeks, Egyptians, and Eskimo, all agreed about the origin of the heavenly lights; all of opinion that "they have formerly been as many of their own ancestors."

The Australian general theory is: "Of the good men and women, after the deluge, Pundjel (a kind of Zeus, or rather a sort of Prometheus, of Australian mythology) made stars. Sorcerers (*Biraark*) can tell which stars were once good men and women." Here the sorcerers have the same knowledge as the Egyptian priests. Again, just as among the Arcadians, "the progenitors of the existing tribes, whether birds, or beasts, or men, were set in the sky, and made to shine as stars."¹

We have already given some Australian examples in the stories of the *Pleiades*, and of *Castor* and *Pollux*. We may add the case of the *Eagle*. In Greece the *Eagle* was the bird of Zeus, who carried off Ganymede to be the cup-bearer of Olympus. Among the Australians this same constellation is called *Totyarguil*; he was a man who, when bathing, was killed by a fabulous animal, a kind of kelpie, as Orion, in Greece, was killed by the *Scorpion*. Like Orion, he was placed among the stars. The Australians have a constellation named *Eagle*, but he is our *Sirius*, or *Dog-star*.

The Indians of the Amazon are in one tale with the Australians and Eskimo. "Dr. Silva de Coutinho informs me," says Professor Hartt,² "that the Indians

¹ Brough Smyth.

² *Amazonian Tortoise Myths*, p. 39. Cf. for Australian mythology, Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-Eastern Australia*.

of the Amazon not only give names to many of the heavenly bodies, but also tell stories about them. The two stars that form the shoulders of Orion are said to be an old man and a boy in a canoe, chasing a *peixe boi*, by which name is designated a dark spot in the sky near the above constellation." The Indians also know monkey-stars, crane-stars, and palm-tree stars.

The Bushmen, almost the lowest tribe of South Africa, have the same star-lore and much the same myths as the Greeks, Australians, Egyptians, and Eskimo. According to Dr. Bleek, "stars, and even the sun and moon, were once mortals on earth, or even animals or inorganic substances, which happened to get translated to the skies. The sun was once a man whose arm-pit radiated a limited amount of light round his house. Some children threw him into the sky, and there he shines." The Homeric hymn to Helios, in the same way, as Mr. Max Müller observes, "looks on the sun as a half-god, almost a hero, who had once lived on earth." The pointers of the Southern Cross were "two men who were lions," just as Callisto, in Arcadia, was a woman who was a bear. It is not at all rare in those queer philosophies, as in that of the Scandinavians, to find that the sun or moon has been a man or woman. In Australian fable the moon was a man, the sun a woman of indifferent character, who appears at dawn in a coat of red kangaroo skins, the present of an admirer. In an old Mexican text the moon was a man, across whose face a god threw a rabbit, thus making the marks in the moon.¹

Many separate races seem to recognise the figure of a hare where we see "the Man in the Moon." In a Buddhist legend an exemplary and altruistic hare was translated to the moon. "To the common people in India the spots on the moon look like a hare, and Chandras, the god of the moon, carries a hare; hence the moon is called *sasin*

or *sasanka*, hare-mark. The Mongolians also see in these shadows the figure of a hare."² Among the Eskimo the moon is a girl, who always flees from her cruel brother, the sun, because he disfigured her face. Elsewhere the sun is the girl, beloved by her own brother, the moon; she blackens her face to avert his affection. On the Rio Branco, and among the Tomunda, the moon is a girl who loved her brother, and visited him in the dark. He detected her wicked passion by drawing his blackened hand over her face. The marks betrayed her, and, as the spots on the moon, remain to this day.²

Among the New Zealanders and North American Indians the sun is a great beast, whom the hunters trapped and thrashed with cudgels. His blood is used in some New Zealand incantations, and, according to an Egyptian myth, was kneaded into clay at the making of man. But there is no end to similar sun-myths, in all of which the sun is regarded as a man, or even as a beast.

To return to the stars:

The Red Indians, as Schoolcraft says, "hold many of the planets to be transformed adventurers." The Iowas "believed stars to be a sort of living creatures." One of them came down and talked to a hunter, and showed him where to find game. The Gallineros of Central California, according to Mr. Bancroft, believe that the sun and moon were made and lighted up by the Hawk and the Coyote, who one day flew into each other's faces in the dark, and were determined to prevent such accidents in the future. But the very oddest example of the survival of the notion that the stars are men or women is found in the *Pax* of Aristophanes. Trygæus in that comedy has just made an expedition to heaven. A slave meets him, and asks him, "Is not the story true, then, that we become stars when we die?" The

¹ Grimm, *D. M.*, Eng. trans., p. 716.

² Hartt, *op. cit.*, p. 40. For a modern sun-man and his myth in the Cyclades, see J. T. Bent, in the *Athenæum*, January 17th, 1885.

answer is, "Certainly"; and Trygæus points out the star into which Ion of Chios has just been metamorphosed. Aristophanes is making fun of some popular Greek superstition. But that very superstition meets us in New Zealand. "Heroes," says Mr. Tylor, "were thought to become stars of greater or less brightness, according to the number of their victims slain in fight."

The Aryan race is seldom far behind when there are ludicrous notions to be credited or savage tales to be told. We have seen that Aristophanes, in Greece, knew the Eskimo doctrine, that stars are souls of the dead. The Persians had the same belief;¹ "all the unnumbered stars were reckoned ghosts of men."² The German folklore clings to the same belief: "Stars are souls; when a child dies God makes a new star." Kaegi quotes³ the same idea from the Veda, and from the Satapatha Brahmana the thoroughly Australian notion that "good men become stars." For a truly savage conception it would be difficult, in South Africa or on the Amazons, to beat the following story from the *Aitareya Brahmana* (iii. 33). Pragapati, the Master of Life, conceived an incestuous passion for his own daughter. Like Zeus, and Indra, and the Australian wooer in the Pleiad tale, he concealed himself under the shape of a beast, a roebuck, and approached his own daughter, who had assumed the form of a doe. The gods, in anger at the awful crime, made a monster to punish Pragapati. The monster sent an arrow through the god's body; he sprang into heaven, and, like the Arcadian bear, this Aryan roebuck became a constellation. He is among the stars of Orion; and his punisher, also now a star, is, like the Greek Orion, a hunter. The daughter of Pragapati, the doe, became another constellation, and the avenging arrow is also a set of stars in the sky. What

follows, about the origin of the gods called Adityas, is really too savage to be quoted by a chaste mythologist.

It would be easy to multiply examples of this stage of thought among Aryans and savages. But we have probably brought forward enough for our purpose, and have expressly chosen instances from the most widely separated peoples. These instances, it will perhaps be admitted, suggest, if they do not prove, that the Greeks had received from tradition precisely the same sort of legends about the heavenly bodies as are current among Eskimo and Bushmen, New Zealanders and Iowas. As much, indeed, might be inferred from our own astronomical nomenclature. We now give to newly-discovered stars names derived from distinguished people, as *Georgium Sidus*, or *Herschel*; or, again, merely technical appellatives, as *Alpha*, *Beta*, and the rest. We should never think, when some "new planet swims into our ken," of calling it *Kangaroo*, or *Rabbit*, or after the name of some hero of romance, as *Rob Roy* or *Count Fosco*. But the names of stars which we inherit from Greek mythology—the *Bear*, the *Pleiades*, *Castor* and *Pollux*, and so forth—are such as no people in our mental condition would originally think of bestowing. When Callimachus and the courtly astronomers of Alexandria pretended that the golden locks of Berenice were raised to the heavens, that was a mere piece of flattery constructed on the inherited model of legends about the crown (*Corona*) of Ariadne. It seems evident enough that the older Greek names of stars are derived from a time when the ancestors of the Greeks were in the mental and imaginative condition of Iowas, Kanekas, Bushmen, Murri, and New Zealanders. All these, and all other savage peoples, believe in a kind of equality and intercommunion among all things animate and inanimate. Stones are supposed in the Pacific Islands to be male and female, and to propagate their species. Animals are believed to have human or superhuman intelligence,

¹ Kaegi, *Der Rig Veda*, p. 217.

² *Mainjo-i-Khard*, 49, 22, ed. West.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 98.

and speech, if they choose to exercise the gift. Stars are just on the same footing, and their movements are explained by the same ready system of universal anthropomorphism. Stars, fishes, gods, heroes, men, trees, clouds, and animals, all play their equal part in the confused dramas of savage thought and savage mythology. Even in practical life the change of a sorcerer into an animal is accepted as a familiar phenomenon; and the power of soaring among the stars is one on which the Australian Biraark, or the Eskimo Shaman, most plumes himself. It is not wonderful that things which are held possible in daily practice should be frequent features of mythology. Hence the ready invention and belief of star-legends, which in their turn fix the names of the heavenly bodies. Nothing more, except the extreme tenacity of tradition and the inconvenience of changing a widely accepted name, is needed to account for the human and animal names of the stars. The Greeks received from the dateless past of savage intellect the myths, and the names of the constellations; and we have taken them, without inquiry, from the Greeks. Thus it happens that our celestial globes are just as queer menageries as any globes could be that were illustrated by Australians or American Indians, by Bushmen or Peruvian aborigines, or Eskimo. It was savages, we may be tolerably certain, who first handed to science the names of the constellations, and provided Greece with the raw material of her astronomical myths—as Bacon prettily says, we listen to the harsh ideas of earlier peoples “blown softly through the flutes of the Grecians.”

The first moment in astronomical science arrives when the savage, looking at a star, says, like the child in the nursery poem, “How I wonder what you are!” The next moment comes when the savage has made his first rough practical observations of the movements of the heavenly body. His third step is to explain these to himself. Now, science

cannot offer any but a fanciful explanation beyond the sphere of experience. The experience of the savage is limited to the narrow world of his tribe, and of the beasts, birds, and fishes of his district. His philosophy, therefore, accounts for all phenomena on the supposition that the laws of the animate nature he observes are working everywhere. But his observations, misguided by his crude magical superstitions, have led him to believe in a state of equality and kinship between men and animals, and even inorganic things. He often worships the very beasts he slays; he addresses them as if they understood him; he believes himself to be descended from the animals, and of their kindred. These confused ideas he applies to the stars, and recognises in them men like himself, or beasts like those with which he conceives himself to be in such close human relations. There is scarcely a bird or beast but the Red Indian or the Australian will explain its peculiarities by a myth, like a page from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. It was once a man or a woman, and has been changed to bird or beast by a god or a magician. Men, again, have originally been beasts, in his philosophy, and are descended from wolves, frogs, or serpents, or monkeys. The heavenly bodies are traced to precisely the same sort of origin; and hence, we conclude, come their strange animal names, and the wild myths about them which appear in all ancient poetry. These names, in turn, have curiously affected human beliefs. Astrology is based on the opinion that a man's character and fate are determined by the stars under which he is born. And the nature of these stars is deduced from their names, so that the bear should have been found in the horoscope of Dr. Johnson. When Giordano Bruno wrote his satire against religion, the famous *Spaccio della bestia trionfante*, he proposed to banish not only the gods, but the beasts, from heaven. He would call the stars, not the *Bear*, or the *Swan*, or the *Pleiades*, but Truth, Mercy,

Justice, and so forth, that men might be born, not under bestial, but moral, influences. But the beasts have had too long possession of the stars to be easily dislodged, and the tenure of the *Bear* and the *Swan* will probably last as long as there is a science of astronomy. Their names are not likely again to delude a philosopher into the opinion of Aristotle, that the stars are animated.

This argument had been worked out to the writer's satisfaction when he chanced to light on Mr. Max Müller's explanation of the name of the *Great Bear*. We have explained that name as only one out of countless similar appellations which men of every race give to the stars. These names, again, we have accounted for as the result of savage philosophy, which takes no great distinction between man and the things in the world, and looks on stars, beasts, birds, fishes, flowers, and trees as men and women in disguise. Mr. Müller's theory is based on philological considerations. He thinks that the name of the *Great Bear* is the result of a mistake as to the meaning of words. There was in Sanskrit, he says,¹ a root *ark*, or *arch*, meaning "to be bright." Some stars are called *riksha*—that is, bright ones—in the Veda.

The constellations here called the *Rikshas*, in the sense of the "bright ones," would be homonymous in Sanskrit with the Bears. Remember also that, apparently without rhyme or reason, the same constellation is called by Greeks and Romans the Bear.....There is not the shadow of a likeness with a bear. You will now perceive the influence of words on thought, or the spontaneous growth of mythology. The name *Riksha* was applied to the bear in the sense of the bright fuscous animal, and in that sense it became most popular in the later Sanskrit, and in Greek and Latin. The same name, "in the sense of the bright ones," had been applied by the Vedic poets to the stars in general, and more particularly to that constellation which in the northern parts of India was the

most prominent. The etymological meaning, "the bright stars," was forgotten; the popular meaning of *Riksha* (bear) was known to everyone. And thus it happened that, when the Greeks had left their central home and settled in Europe, they retained the name of *Arktos* for the same unchanging stars; but, not knowing why those stars had originally received that name, they ceased to speak of them as *arktol*, or many bears, and spoke of them as the Bear.

This is a very good example of the philological way of explaining a myth. If once we admit that *ark*, or *arch*, in the sense of "bright" and of "bear," existed, not only in Sanskrit, but in the undivided Aryan tongue, and that the name *Riksha*, bear, "became in that sense most popular in Greek and Latin," this theory seems more than plausible. But the explanation does not look so well if we examine, not only the Aryan, but all the known myths and names of the Bear and the other stars. Professor Sayce, a distinguished philologist, says we may not compare non-Aryan with Aryan myths. We have ventured to do so, however, in this paper, and have shown that the most widely severed races give the stars animal names, of which the *Bear* is one example. Now, if the philologists wish to persuade us that it was decaying and half-forgotten language which caused men to give the names of animals to the stars, they must prove their case on an immense collection of instances—on Iowa, Kaneka, Murri, Maori, Brazilian, Peruvian, Mexican, Egyptian, Eskimo, instances. It would be the most amazing coincidence in the world if forgetfulness of the meaning of their own speech compelled tribes of every tongue and race to recognise men and beasts, cranes, cockatoos, serpents, monkeys, bears, and so forth, in the heavens. How came the misunderstood words always to be misunderstood in the same way? Does the philological explanation account for the enormous majority of the phenomena? If it fails, we may at least doubt whether it solves the one isolated case of the

¹ *Lectures on Language*, pp. 359, 362.

Great Bear among the Greeks and Romans. It must be observed that the philological explanation of Mr. Müller does not clear up the Arcadian story of their own descent from a she-bear who is now a star. Yet similar stories of the descent of tribes from animals are so widespread that it would be difficult to name the race or the quarter of the globe where they are not found. Are they all derived from misunderstood words meaning "bright"? These considerations appear to be a strong argument for comparing not only Aryan, but all attainable, myths. We shall often find, if we take a wide view, that the philological explanation, which seemed plausible in a single case, is hopelessly narrow when applied to a large collection of

parallel cases in languages of various families.

Finally, in dealing with star-myths, we adhere to the hypothesis of Mr. Tylor. "From savagery up to civilisation," Akkadian, Greek, or English,

there may be traced in the mythology of the stars a course of thought, changed, indeed, in application, yet never broken in its evident connection from first to last. The savage sees individual stars as animate beings, or combines star-groups into living celestial creatures, or limbs of them, or objects connected with them; while at the other extremity of the scale of civilisation the modern astronomer keeps up just such ancient fancies, turning them to account in useful survival, as a means of mapping out the celestial globe.¹

¹ Ideler (*Untersuchungen ueber den Ursprung der Sternnamen*) may also be consulted.

VI.

"KALEVALA"; OR, THE FINNISH NATIONAL EPIC

It is difficult to account for the fact that the scientific curiosity which is just now so busy in examining all the monuments of the primitive condition of our race should, in England at least, have almost totally neglected to popularise the *Kalevala*, or national poem of the Finns. Besides its fresh and simple beauty of style, its worth as a storehouse of every kind of primitive folklore, being as it is the production of an *Urvolk*, a nation that has undergone no violent revolution in language or institutions, the *Kalevala* has the peculiar interest

of occupying a position between the two kinds of primitive poetry, the ballad and the epic. So much difficulty has been introduced into the study of the first developments of song, by confusing these distinct sorts of composition under the name of popular poetry, that it may be well, in writing of a poem which occupies a middle place between epic and ballad, to define what we mean by each.

The author of our old English *Art of Poesie* begins his work with a statement which may serve as a text. "Poesie," says Puttenham, writing in 1589, "is more ancient than the *artificiall* of the Greeks and Latines, coming by instinct of nature, and used by the savage and

¹ See Comparetti's excellent work, *The Kalevala*. (Longmans.)

uncivill, who were before all science and civilitie. This is proved by certificate of merchants and travellers, who by late navigations have surveyed the whole world, and discovered large countries, and strange people, wild and savage, affirming that the American, the Perusine, and the very canniball, do sing, and also say, their highest and holiest matters in certain riming versicles." Puttenham is here referring to that instinct of primitive men which compels them in all moments of high-wrought feeling, and on all solemn occasions, to give utterance to a kind of chant.¹ Such a chant is the song of Lamech, when he had "slain a man to his wounding." So in the Norse sagas Grettir and Gunnar *sing* when they have anything particular to say; and so in the *Märchen*—the primitive fairy-tales of all nations—scraps of verse are introduced where emphasis is wanted. This craving for passionate expression takes a more formal shape in the lays which among all primitive peoples, as among the modern Greeks to-day,² are sung at betrothals, funerals, and departures for distant lands. These songs have been collected in Scotland by Scott and Motherwell; their Danish counterparts have been translated by Mr. Prior. In Greece, M. Fauriel and Dr. Ulrichs; in Provence, Damase Arbaud; in Italy, M. Nigra; in Servia, Talvj; in France, Gérard de Nerval, have done for their separate countries what Scott did for the Border. Professor Child, of Harvard, has published a beautiful critical collection of English *Volkslieder*, with all known variants from every country.

A comparison of the collections proves that among all European lands the primitive "versicles" of the people are akin in tone, form, and incident. It is this kind of early expression of a people's life—careless, abrupt, brief, as was necessitated by the fact that they were sung to the accompaniment of the dance—that we call ballads. These are distinctly,

and in every sense, popular poems; and nothing can cause greater confusion than to apply the same title, "popular," to early epic poetry. Ballads are short; a long ballad, as Mr. Matthew Arnold has said, creeps and halts. A true epic, on the other hand, is long, and its tone is grand, noble, and sustained. Ballads are not artistic; while the form of the epic, whether we take the hexameter or the rougher *laisse* of the French *chansons de geste*, is full of conscious and admirable art. Lastly, popular ballads deal with vague characters, acting and living in vague places; while the characters of an epic are heroes of definite station, *whose descendants are still in the land*, whose home is a recognisable place—Ithaca, or Argos. Now, though these two kinds of early poetry—the ballad, the song of the people; the epic, the song of the chiefs of the people, of the ruling race—are distinct in kind, it does not follow that they have no connection, that the nobler may not have been developed out of the materials of the lower form of expression. And the value of the *Kalevala* is partly this—that it combines the continuity and unison of the epic with the simplicity and popularity of the ballad, and so forms a kind of link in the history of the development of poetry. This may become clearer as we proceed to explain the literary history of the Finnish national poem.

Sixty years ago, it may be said, no one was aware that Finland possessed a national poem at all. Her people—who claim affinity with the Magyars of Hungary, but are possibly a back-wave of an earlier tide of population—had remained untouched by foreign influences since their conquest by Sweden, and their somewhat lax and wholesale conversion to Christianity: events which took place gradually between the middle of the twelfth and the end of the thirteenth centuries. Under the rule of Sweden, the Finns were left to their quiet life and undisturbed imaginings, among the forests and lakes of the region which

¹ Talvj, *Charakteristik der Volkslieder*, p. 3.

² Fauriel, *Chants de la Grèce moderne*.

they aptly called Pohja, "the end of things"; while their educated classes took no very keen interest in the native poetry and mythology of their race. At length the annexation of Finland by Russia, in 1809, awakened national feeling, and stimulated research into songs and customs which were the heirlooms of the people.

It was the policy of Russia to encourage, rather than to check, this return on a distant past; and from the north of Norway to the slopes of the Altai ardent explorers sought out the fragments of unwritten early poetry. These runes, or *Runots*, were chiefly sung by old men called *Runoias*, to beguile the weariness of the long dark winters. The custom was for two champions to engage in a contest of memory, clasping each other's hands, and reciting in turn till he whose memory first gave in slackened his hold. The *Kalevala* contains an instance of this practice, where it is said that no one was so hardy as to clasp hands with Wäinämöinen, who is at once the Orpheus and the Prometheus of Finnish mythology. These *Runoias*, or rhapsodists, complain, of course, of the degeneracy of human memory; they notice how any foreign influence, in religion or politics, is destructive to the native songs of a race.¹ "As for the lays of old time, a thousand have been scattered to the wind, a thousand buried in the snow;.....as for those which the Monks (the Teutonic knights) swept away and the prayer of the priests overwhelmed, a thousand tongues were not able to recount them." In spite of the losses thus caused, and in spite of the suspicious character of the Finns, which often made the task of collection a dangerous one, enough materials remained to furnish Dr. Lönnrot, the most noted explorer, with thirty-five *Runots*, or cantos. These were published

in 1835, but later research produced the fifteen cantos which make up the symmetrical fifty of the *Kalevala*. In the task of arranging and uniting these Dr. Lönnrot played the part traditionally ascribed to the commission of Pisistratus in relation to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Dr. Lönnrot cut about and altered at pleasure the materials which come before us as one poem. They have little unity now, and originally had none.

It cannot be doubted that, at whatever period the Homeric poems took shape in Greece, they were believed to record the feats of the supposed ancestors of existing families. Thus, for example, Pisistratus, as a descendant of the Nelidæ, had an interest in securing certain parts, at least, of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* from oblivion. The same family pride embellished and preserved the epic poetry of early France. There were in France but three heroic houses, or *gestes*, and three corresponding cycles of *épopées*. Now, in the *Kalevala* there is no trace of the influence of family feeling; it was no one's peculiar care and pride to watch over the records of the fame of this or that hero. The poem begins with a cosmogony as wild as any Indian dream of creation; and the human characters who move in the story are shadowy inhabitants of no very definite lands, whom no family claim as their forefathers. The very want of this idea of family and aristocratic pride gives the *Kalevala* a unique place among epics. It is emphatically an epic of the people, of that class whose life contains no element of progress, no break in continuity; which from age to age preserves, in solitude and close communion with nature, the earliest beliefs of grey antiquity. The Greek epic, on the other hand, has, as Preller² points out, "nothing to do with natural man,

¹ Thus Scotland scarcely produced any good ballads, properly speaking, after the Reformation. The Kirk suppressed the dances to whose motion the ballad was sung in Scotland, as in Greece, Provence, and France.

² L. Preller's *Ausgewählte Aufsätze*. Greek ideas on the origin of man. It is curious that the myth of a gold, a silver, and a copper race occurs in South America. See Brasseur de Bourbourg's *Notes on the Popol Vuh*.

but with an ideal world of heroes, with sons of the gods, with consecrated kings, heroes, elders, *a kind of specific race of men*. The people exist only as subsidiary to the great houses, as a mere background against which stand out the shining figures of heroes; as a race of beings fresh and rough from the hands of nature, with whom, and with whose concerns, the great houses and their bards have little concern." This feeling—so universal in Greece, and in the feudal countries of mediæval Europe—that there are two kinds of men, the golden and the brazen race, as Plato would have called them, is absent, with all its results, in the *Kalevala*.

Among the Finns we find no trace of an aristocracy; there is scarcely a mention of kings or priests; the heroes of the poem are really popular heroes—fishers, smiths, husbandmen, "medicine-men," or wizards; exaggerated shadows of the people, pursuing, on a heroic scale, not war, but the common daily business of primitive and peaceful men. In recording their adventures the *Kalevala*, like the shield of Achilles, reflects all the life of a race—the feasts, the funerals, the rites of seed-time and harvest, of marriage and death, the hymn, and the magical incantation.

Though without the interest of an unique position as a popular epic, the *Kalevala* is very valuable, both for its literary beauties and for the confused mass of folklore which it contains.

Here old cosmogonies, attempts of man to represent to himself the beginnings of things, are mingled with the same wild imaginings as are found everywhere in the shape of fairy tales. We are hurried from an account of the mystic egg of creation, to a hymn like that of the Ambarval Brothers, to a strangely familiar scrap of a nursery story, to an incident which we remember as occurring in almost identical words in a Scotch ballad. We are among a people which endows everything with human characters and life, which is in familiar relations with birds, and beasts,

and even with rocks and plants. Ravens and wolves and fishes of the sea, sun, moon, and stars, are kindly or churlish; drops of blood find speech; man and maid change to snake or swan, and resume their forms; ships have magic powers, like the ships of the Phæacians.

Then there is the oddest confusion of every stage of religious development. We find a supreme God, delighting in righteousness; Ukko, the lord of the vault of air, who stands apart from men, and sends his son, Wäinämöinen, to be their teacher in music and agriculture.

Across this faith comes a religion of petrified abstractions, like those of the Roman Pantheon. There are gods of colour, a goddess of weaving, a goddess of man's blood, besides elemental spirits of woods and waters, and the *manes* of the dead. Meanwhile the working faith of the people is the belief in magic—generally a sign of the lower culture. It is supposed that the knowledge of certain magic words gives power over the elemental bodies which obey them; it is held that the will of a distant sorcerer can cross the lakes and plains like the breath of a fantastic frost, with power to change an enemy to ice or stone. Traces remain of the worship of animals: there is a hymn to the bear; a dance like the bear-dance of the American Indians; and another hymn tells of the birth and power of the serpent. Across all, and closing all, comes a hostile account of the origin of Christianity—the end of joy and music.

How primitive was the condition of the authors of this medley of beliefs is best proved by the survival of the custom called exogamy.* This custom, which is not peculiar to the Finns, but is probably a universal note of early society, prohibits marriage between members of the same kin. Consequently, the main action, such as it is, of the *Kalevala* turns on the efforts made by the men of

* See essay on *Early History of the Family*.

Kaleva to obtain brides from the hostile tribe of Pohja.*

Further proof of ancient origin is to be found in what is the great literary beauty of the poem—its pure spontaneity and simplicity. It is the production of an intensely imaginative race, to which song came as the most natural expression of joy and sorrow, terror or triumph—a class which lay near to nature's secret, and was not out of sympathy with the wild kin of woods and waters.

These songs [says the prelude] were found by the wayside, and gathered in the depths of the copses; blown from the branches of the forest, and culled among the plumes of the pine-trees. These lays came to me as I followed the flocks, in a land of meadows honey-sweet and of golden hills.....The cold has spoken to me, and the rain has told me her runes; the winds of heaven, the waves of the sea, have spoken and sung to me; the wild birds have taught me, the music of many waters has been my master.

The metre in which the epic is chanted resembles, to an English ear, that of Mr. Longfellow's *Hiawatha*—there is assonance rather than rhyme; and a very musical effect is produced by the liquid character of the language, and by the frequent alliterations.

This rough outline of the main characteristics of the *Kalevala* we shall now try to fill up with an abstract of its contents. The poem is longer than the *Iliad*, and much of interest must necessarily be omitted; but it is only through such an abstract that any idea can be given of the sort of unity which does prevail amid the most utter discrepancy.

In the first place, what is to be understood by the word *Kalevala*? The affix *la* signifies "abode." Thus, "Tuonela" is "the abode of Tuoni," the god

of the lower world; and as "kaleva" means "heroic," "magnificent," "Kalevala" is "The Home of Heroes." The poem is a record of the adventures of the people of Kalevala—of their strife with the men of Pohjola, the place of the world's end. We may fancy two old Runoias, or singers, clasping hands on one of the first nights of the Finnish winter, and beginning (what probably has never been accomplished) the attempt to work through the *Kalevala* before the return of summer. They commence *ab ovo*, or, rather, before the egg. First is chanted the birth of Wainämöinen, the benefactor and teacher of men. He is the son of Luonnotar, the daughter of Nature, who answers to the first woman of the Iroquois cosmogony. Beneath the breath and touch of wind and tide she conceived a child; but nine ages of man passed before his birth, while the mother floated on "the formless and the multiform waters." Then Ukko, the supreme God, sent an eagle, which laid her eggs in the maiden's bosom, and from these eggs grew earth and sky, sun and moon, star and cloud. Then was Wainämöinen born on the waters, and reached a barren land, and gazed on the new heavens and the new earth. There he sowed the grain that is the bread of man, chanting the hymn used at seed-time, calling on the mother earth to make the green herb spring, and on Ukko to send down clouds and rain. So the corn sprang, and the golden cuckoo—which in Finland plays the part of the popinjay in Scotch ballads, or of the three golden birds in Greek folk-songs—came with his congratulations. In regard to the epithet "golden," it may be observed that gold and silver, in the Finnish epic, are lavished on the commonest objects of daily life.

This is a universal note of primitive poetry, and is not a peculiar Finnish idiom, as M. Leouzon le Duc supposes; nor, as Mr. Tozer seems to think, in his account of Romaic ballads, a trace of Oriental influence among the modern Greeks. It is common to all the ballads

* This constant struggle may be, and of course by one school of comparative mythologists will be, represented as the strife between light and darkness, the sun's rays and the clouds of night, and so on. M. Castrén has well pointed out that the struggle has really an historical meaning. Even if the myth be an elementary one, its constructors must have been in the exogamous stage of society.

of Europe, as M. Ampère has pointed out, and may be observed in the *Chanson de Roland*, and in Homer.

While the corn ripened, Wäinämöinen rested from his labours, and took the task of Orpheus. He sang, says the *Kalevala*, of the origin of things, of the mysteries hidden from babes, that none may attain to in this sad life, in the hours of these perishable days. The fame of the Runoia's singing excited jealousy in the breast of one of the men around him, of whose origin the *Kalevala* gives no account. This man, Joukahainen, provoked him to a trial of song, boasting, like Empedocles, or like one of the old Celtic bards, that he had been all things. "When the earth was made, I was there; when space was unrolled, I launched the sun on his way." Then was Wäinämöinen wroth, and by the force of his enchantment he rooted Joukahainen to the ground, and suffered him not to go free without promising him the hand of his sister Aino. The mother was delighted; but the girl wept that she must now cover her long locks, her curls, her glory, and be the wife of "the old, imperturbable Wäinämöinen." It is in vain that her mother offers her dainty food and rich dresses; she flees from home, and wanders till she meets three maidens bathing, and joins them, and is drowned, singing a sad song: "Ah, never may my sister come to bathe in the sea-water, for the drops of the sea are the drops of my blood." This wild idea occurs in the Romaic ballad, ἡ κόρη ταξιθεύτρια, where a drop of blood on the lips of the drowned girl tinges all the waters of the world. To return to the fate of Aino. A swift hare runs (as in the Zulu legend of the Origin of Death) with the tale of sorrow to the maiden's mother, and from the mother's tears flow rivers of water, and therein are isles with golden hills where golden birds make melody. As for the old, the imperturbable Runoia, he loses his claim to the latter title; he is filled with sorrow, and searches through all the elements for his lost bride. At length he catches

a fish which is unknown to him, who, like Atlas, "knew the depths of all the seas." The strange fish slips from his hands; a "tress of hair, of drowned maiden's hair," floats for a moment on the foam; and too late he recognises that "there was never salmon yet that shone so fair, above the nets at sea." His lost bride has been within his reach, and now is doubly lost to him. Suddenly the waves are cloven asunder, and the mother of Nature and of Wäinämöinen appears, to comfort her son, like Thetis from the deep. She bids him go and seek, in the land of Pohjola, a bride alien to his race. After many a wild adventure, Wäinämöinen reaches Pohjola, and is kindly entreated by Loutri, the mother of the maiden of the land. But he grows homesick, and complains, almost in Dante's words, of the bitter bread of exile. Loutri will only grant him her daughter's hand on condition that he gives her a *sampo*. A *sampo* is a mysterious engine that grinds meal, salt, and money. In fact, it is the mill in the well-known fairy-tale, *Why the Sea is Salt*.^{*}

Wäinämöinen cannot fashion this mill himself; he must seek aid at home from Ilmarinen, the smith who forged "the iron vault of hollow heaven." As the hero returns to Kalevala, he meets the Lady of the Rainbow, seated on the arch of the sky, weaving the golden thread. She promises to be his, if he will accomplish certain tasks, and in the course of those he wounds himself with an axe. The wound can only be healed by one who knows the mystic words that hold the secret of the birth of iron. The legend of this evil birth—how iron grew from the milk of a maiden, and was forged by the primeval smith, Ilmarinen, to be the bane of warlike men—is communicated by Wäinämöinen to an old

^{*} Sampo may be derived from a Thibetan word, meaning "fountain of good"; or it may possibly be connected with the Swedish *stamp*, a hand-mill. The talisman is made of all the quaint odds and ends that the Fetishist treasures—swan's feathers, flocks of wool, and so on.

magician. The wizard then solemnly curses the iron, *as a living thing*, and invokes the aid of the supreme God Ukko, thus bringing together in one prayer the extremes of early religion. Then the hero is healed, and gives thanks to the Creator, "in whose hands is the end of a matter."

Returning to Kalevala, Wäinämöinen sends Ilmarinen to Pohjola to make the sampo, "a mill for corn one day, for salt the next, for money the next." The fatal treasure is concealed by Loutri, and is obviously to play the part of the fairy hoard in the *Nibelungen Lied*.

With the eleventh canto a new hero, Ahti, or Lemminkainen, and a new cycle of adventures, is introduced. Lemminkainen is a profligate wanderer, with as many loves as Hercules. The fact that he is regarded as a form of the sea-god makes it strange that his most noted achievement, the seduction of the whole female population of his island, should correspond with a like feat of Krishna's. "Sixteen thousand and one hundred," says the Vishnu Purana, "was the number of the maidens; and into so many forms did the son of Madhu multiply himself, so that every one of the damsels thought that he had wedded her in her single person." Krishna is the sun, perhaps, and the maidens are the dewdrops; it is to be hoped that Lemminkainen's connection with sea-water may save him from the solar hypothesis. His first regular marriage is unhappy, and he is slain in trying to capture a bride from the people of Pohjola. The black waters of the river of forgetfulness sweep him away, and his comb, which he left with his mother, bursts out bleeding—a frequent incident in Russian and other fairy-tales. In many household tales the hero, before setting out on a journey, erects a stick, which will fall down when he is in distress, or death. The natives of Australia use this form of divination in actual practice, tying round the stick some of the hair of the person whose fate is to be ascertained. Then, like Demeter seeking Persephonê, the mother

questions all the beings of the world, and their answers show a wonderful poetic sympathy with the silent life of Nature. "The moon said: 'I have sorrows enough of my own, without thinking of thy child. My lot is hard, my days are evil. I am born to wander companionless in the night, to shine in the season of frost, to watch through the endless winter, to fade when summer comes as king.'" The sun is kinder, and reveals the place of the hero's body. The mother collects the scattered limbs; the birds bring healing balm from the heights of heaven; and, after a hymn to the goddess of man's blood, Lemminkainen is made sound and well, as the scattered "fragments of no more a man" were united by the spell of Medea, like those of Osiris by Isis, or of the fair countess by the demon blacksmith in the Russian *Märchen*, or of the Carib hero mentioned by Mr. M'Lennan,¹ or of the ox in the South African household tale.

With the sixteenth canto we return to Wäinämöinen, who, like all epic heroes, visits the place of the dead, Tuonela. The maidens who play the part of Charon are with difficulty induced to ferry over a man bearing no mark of death by fire or sword or water. Once among the dead, Wäinämöinen refuses—being wiser than Psyche or Persephonê—to taste of drink. This "taboo" is found in Japanese, Melanesian, and Red Indian accounts of the homes of the dead. Thus the hero is able to return and behold the stars. Arrived in the upper world, he warns men to "beware of perverting innocence, of leading astray the pure of heart; they that do these things shall be punished eternally in the depths of Tuoni. There is a place prepared for evil-doers, a bed of stones burning, rocks of fire, worms, and serpents." This speech throws but little light on the question of how far a doctrine of rewards and punishments enters into primitive

¹ *Fortnightly Review*, 1869: "The Worship of Plants and Animals."

ideas of a future state. The *Kalevala*, as we possess it, is necessarily, though faintly, tinged with Christianity; and the peculiar vices which are here threatened with punishment are not those which would have been most likely to occur to the early heathen singers of this *runot*.

Wäinämöinen and Ilmarinen now go together to Pohjola; but the fickle maiden of the land prefers the young forger of the sampq to his elder and imperturbable companion. Like a northern Medea, or like the Master-maid in Dr. Dasent's *Tales from the Norse*, or like the hero of the Algonquin tale and the Samoan ballad, she aids her alien lover to accomplish the tasks assigned to him. He ploughs with a plough of gold the adder-close, or field of serpents; he bridles the wolf and the bear of the lower world, and catches the pike that swim in the waters of forgetfulness. After this, the parents cannot refuse their consent; the wedding feast is prepared, and all the world, except the *séduisant* Lemminkainen, is bidden to the banquet. The narrative now brings in the ballads that are sung at a Finnish marriage.

First, the son-in-law enters the house of the parents of the bride, saying, "Peace abide with you in this illustrious hall." The mother answers, "Peace be with you even in this lowly hut." Then Wäinämöinen began to sing, and no man was so hardy as to clasp hands and contend with him in song. Next follow the songs of farewell, the mother telling the daughter of what she will have to endure in a strange home: "Thy life was soft and delicate in thy father's house. Milk and butter were ready to thy hand; thou wert as a flower of the field, as a strawberry of the wood; all care was left to the pines of the forest, all wailing to the wind in the woods of barren lands. But now thou goest to another home, to an alien mother, to doors that grate strangely on their hinges." "My thoughts," the maiden replies, "are as a dark night of autumn, as a cloudy day of winter; my heart is sadder than the autumn night, more weary than the winter day." The

maid and the bridegroom are then lyrically instructed in their duties. The girl is to be long-suffering, the husband to try five years' gentle treatment before he cuts a willow wand for his wife's correction. The bridal party sets out for home; a new feast is spread, and the bridegroom congratulated on the courage he must have shown in stealing a girl from a hostile tribe.

While all is merry, the mischievous Lemminkainen sets out, an unbidden guest, for Pohjola. On his way he encounters a serpent, which he slays by the song of serpent-charming. In this "mystic chain of verse" the serpent is not addressed as the gentle reptile, god of southern peoples, but is spoken of with all hatred and loathing: "Black creeping thing of the low lands, monster flecked with the colours of death, thou that hast on thy skin the stain of the sterile soil, get thee forth from the path of a hero." After slaying the serpent, Lemminkainen reaches Pohjola, kills one of his hosts, and fixes his head on one of a thousand stakes for human skulls that stood about the house, as they might round the hut of a Dyak in Borneo. He then flees to the isle of Saari, whence he is driven for his heroic profligacy, and by the hatred of the only girl whom he has *not* wronged. This is a very pretty touch of human nature.

He now meditates a new incursion into Pohjola. The mother of Pohjola (it is just worth noticing that the leadership assumed by this woman points to a state of society when the family was scarcely formed) calls to her aid "her child the Frost"; but the frost is put to shame by a hymn of the invader's, a song against the Cold: "The serpent was his foster-mother, the serpent with her barren breasts; the wind of the north rocked his cradle, and the ice-wind sang him to sleep, in the midst of the wild marsh-land, where the wells of the waters begin." It is a curious instance of the animism, the vivid power of personifying all the beings and forces of nature, which marks the *Kalevala*, that the Cold speaks

to Lemminkainen in human voice, and seeks a reconciliation.

At this part of the epic there is an obvious lacuna. The story goes to Kullervo, a luckless man, who serves as shepherd to Ilmarinen. Thinking himself ill-treated by the heroic smith's wife, the shepherd changes his flock into bears and wolves, which devour their mistress. Then he returns to his own home, where he learns that his sister has been lost for many days, and is believed to be dead. Travelling in search of her, he meets a girl, loves her, and all unwittingly commits an inexpressible offence. "Then," says the *Kalevala*, "came up the new dawn, and the maiden spoke, saying: 'What is thy race, bold young man, and who is thy father?' Kullervo said: 'I am the wretched son of Kalerva; but tell me, what is thy race, and who is thy father?' Then said the maiden: 'I am the wretched daughter of Kalerva. Ah! would God that I had died, then might I have grown with the green grass, and blossomed with the flowers, and never known this sorrow.' With this she sprang into the midst of the foaming waves, and found peace in Tuoni, and rest in the waters of forgetfulness." Then there was no word for Kullervo, but the bitter moan of the brother in the terrible Scotch ballad of the *Bonny Hind*; and no rest but in death by his own sword, where grass grows never on his sister's tomb.

The epic now draws to a close. Ilmarinen seeks a new wife in Pohjola, and endeavours, with Wainämöinen's help, to recover the mystic sampo. On the voyage the Runoia makes a harp out of the bones of a monstrous fish—so strange a harp that none may play it but himself. When he played all four-footed things came about him, and the white birds dropped down "like a storm of snow." The maidens of the sun and the moon paused in their weaving, and the golden thread fell from their hands. The Ancient One of the sea-water listened, and the nymphs of the wells forgot to comb their loose locks with the golden combs. All men and maidens and little children

wept, amid the silent joy of nature; nay, the great harper wept, and of his tears were pearls made.

In the war with Pohjola the heroes were victorious; but the sampo was broken in the fight, and lost in the sea, and that, perhaps, is "why the sea is salt." Fragments were collected, however; and Loutri, furious at the success of the heroes of Kalevala, sent against them a bear, destructive as the boar of Calydon. But Wainämöinen despatched the monster, and the body was brought home with the bear-dance, and the hymn of the bear. "O Otso," cry the singers, "be not angry that we come near thee. The bear, the honey-footed bear, was born in lands between sun and moon, and he died not by men's hands, but of his own will." The Finnish savants are probably right who find here a trace of the beast-worship which in many lands has placed the bear among the number of the stars. Propitiation of the bear is practised by Red Indians, by the Ainos of Japan, and (in the case of the "native bear") by Australians. The Red Indians have a myth to prove that the bear is immortal, does not die, but, after his apparent death, rises again in another body. There is no trace, however, that the Finns claimed, like the Danes, descent from the bear. The Lapps, a people of confused belief, worshipped him, along with Thor, Christ, the sun, and the serpent.¹

But another cult, an alien creed, is approaching Kalevala. There is no part of the poem more strange than the closing canto, which tells in the wildest language, and through the most exaggerated forms of savage imagination, the tale of the introduction of Christianity. Marjatta was a maiden, "as pure as the dew is, as holy as the stars are that live without stain." As she fed her flocks, and listened to the singing of the golden cuckoo, a berry fell into her bosom. After many days she bore a child, and the people despised and rejected her,

¹ Mr. M'Lennan, in the *Fortnightly Review*, February, 1870.

and she was thrust forth, and her babe was born in a stable, and cradled in the manger. Who should baptise the babe? The god of the wilderness refused, and Wainämöinen would have had the young child slain. Then the infant rebuked the ancient Demigod, who fled in anger to the sea; and with his magic song he built a magic barque, and he sat therein, and took the helm in his hand. The tide bore him out to sea, and he lifted his voice and sang: "Times go by, and suns shall rise and set, and then shall men have need of me, and shall look for the promise of my coming, that I may make a new sampo, and a new harp, and bring back sunlight and moonshine, and the joy that is banished from the world." Then he crossed the waters, and gained the limits of the sea, and the lower spaces of the sky.

Here the strange poem ends at its strangest moment, with the cry, which must have been uttered so often, but is heard here alone, of a people reluctantly deserting the gods that it has fashioned in its own likeness, for a faith that has not sprung from its own needs or fears. Yet it cherishes the hope that this tyranny shall pass over: "They are gods, and behold they shall die, and the waves be upon them at last."

As the *Kalevala*, and as all relics of folklore, all *Märchen* and ballads prove, the lower mythology—the elemental beliefs of the people—do survive beneath a thin covering of Christian conformity. There are, in fact, in religion, as in society, two worlds, of which the one does not know how the other lives. The class whose literature we inherit, under whose institutions we live, at whose shrines we worship, has changed as outworn raiment its manners, its gods, its laws; has looked before and after, has hoped and forgotten, has advanced from the wilder and grosser to the purest faith. Beneath the progressive class, and beneath the waves of this troublesome world, there exists an order whose primitive form of human life has been far less changeful, a class which has put on a mere semblance of new

faiths, while half-consciously retaining the remains of immemorial cults.

Obviously, as M. Fauviel has pointed out in the case of the modern Greeks, the life of such folk contains no element of progress, admits no break in continuity. Conquering armies pass and leave them still reaping the harvest of field and river; religions appear, and they are baptised by thousands, but the lower beliefs and dreads that the progressive class has outgrown remain unchanged.

Thus, to take the instance of modern Greece, the high gods of the divine race of Achilles and Agamemnon are forgotten, but the descendants of the Penestæ, the *villains* of Thessaly, still dread the beings of the popular creed, the Nereids, the Cyclopes, and the Lamia.*

The last lesson we would attempt to gather from the *Kalevala* is this: that a comparison of the *thoroughly popular* beliefs of all countries, the beliefs cherished by the non-literary classes whose ballads and fairy-tales have only recently been collected, would probably reveal a general identity, concealed by diversity of name, among the "lesser people of the skies," the elves, fairies, cyclopes, giants, nereids, brownies, lamia. It could then be shown that some of these spirits survive among the lower beings of the mythology of what the Germans call a *Cultur-volk* like the Greeks or Romans. It could also be proved that much of the narrative element in the classic epics is to be found in a popular or childish form in primitive fairy-tales. The question would then come to be, Have the higher mythologies been developed, by artistic poets, out of the materials of a race which remained comparatively untouched by culture; or are the lower spirits, and the more simple and puerile forms of myth, degradations of the inventions of a cultivated class? In the majority of cases, the former theory is correct.

* M. Schmidt, *Volksleben der Neugriechen*, finds comparatively few traces of the worship of Zeus, and these mainly in proverbial expressions.

VII.

THE DIVINING ROD

THERE is something remarkable, and not flattering to human sagacity, in the periodical resurrection of superstitions. Houses, for example, go on being "haunted" in country districts, and no educated man notices the circumstance. Then comes a case like that of the Drummer of Tedworth, or the Cock Lane Ghost; and society is deeply moved, philosophers plunge into controversy, and he who grubs among the dusty tracts of the past finds a world of fugitive literature on forgotten bogies. Chairs move untouched by human hands, and tables walk about in lonely castles of Savoy, and no one marks them; till a day comes when the furniture of some American cottage is similarly afflicted, and then a shoddy new religion is based on the phenomenon. The latest revival among old beliefs is faith in the divining rod. "Our liberal shepherds give it a *shorter* name," and so do our conservative peasants, calling the "rod of Jacob" the "twig." To "work the twig" is rural English for the craft of Dousterswivel in the *Antiquary*, and perhaps from this comes our slang expression to "twig," or divine, the hidden meaning of another. Recent correspondence in the newspapers has proved that, whatever may be the truth about the "twig," belief in its powers is still very prevalent. Respectable people are not ashamed to bear signed witness to its miraculous powers of detecting springs of water and secret mines. It is habitually used by the miners in the Mendips, as Mr. Woodward found ten years ago; and forked hazel divining rods from the Mendips are a recognised part of ethnological collections. There are two ways of investigating the facts

or fancies about the rod. One is to examine it in its actual operation—a task of considerable labour, which has recently been undertaken by the Society for Psychical Research; the other, and easier way, is to study the appearances of the divining wand in history, and that is what we propose to do in this article.

When a superstition or belief is widely spread in Europe, as the faith in the divining rod certainly is (in Germany rods are hidden under babies' clothes when they are baptised), we naturally expect to find traces of it in ancient times and among savages all over the modern world. We have already examined, in "The Bull-Roader," a very similar example. We saw that there is a magical instrument—a small fish-shaped piece of thin flat wood tied to a thong—which, when whirled in the air, produces a strange noise, a compound of roar and buzz. This instrument is sacred among the natives of Australia, where it is used to call together the men, and to frighten away the women from the religious mysteries of the males. The same instrument is employed for similar purposes in New Mexico, and in South Africa and New Zealand—parts of the world very widely distant from each other, and inhabited by very diverse races. It has also been lately discovered that the Greeks used this toy, which they called *ρόμβος*, in the Mysteries of Dionysus, and possibly it may be identical with the *mystica vannus Iacchi* (Virgil, *Georgics*, i. 166). The conclusion drawn by the ethnologist is that this object, called *turndun* by the Australians, is a very early savage invention, probably discovered and applied to religious purposes in various separate centres.

and retained from the age of savagery in the mystic rites of Greeks, and perhaps of Romans. Well, do we find anything analogous in the case of the divining rod?

Future researches may increase our knowledge, but at present little or nothing is known of the divining rod in classical ages, and not very much (though that little is significant) among uncivilised races. It is true that in all countries rods or wands, the Latin *virga*, have a magical power. Virgil obtained his mediæval reputation as a wizard because his name was erroneously connected with *virgula*, the magic wand. But we do not actually know that the ancient wand of the enchantress Circe, in Homer, or the wand of Hermes, was used, like the divining rod, to indicate the whereabouts of hidden wealth or water. In the Homeric hymn to Hermes (line 529) Apollo thus describes the *caduceus*, or wand of Hermes: "Thereafter will I give thee a lovely wand of wealth and riches, a golden wand with three leaves, which shall keep thee ever unharmed." In later art this wand, or *caduceus*, is usually entwined with serpents; but on one vase, at least, the wand of Hermes is simply the forked twig of our rustic miners and water-finders. The same form is found on an engraved Etruscan mirror.¹

Now, was a wand of this form used in classical times to discover hidden objects of value? That wands were used by Scythians and Germans in various methods of casting lots is certain; but that is not the same thing as the working of the twig. Cicero speaks of a fabled wand by which wealth can be procured; but he says nothing of the method of its use, and possibly was only thinking of the rod of Hermes, as described in the Homeric hymn already quoted. There was a Roman *satyra*, by Varro, called "*Virgula Divina*"; fragments remain, but throw no light on the subject. A passage usually quoted from

Seneca has no more to do with the divining rod than with the telephone. Pliny is a writer extremely fond of marvels; yet, when he describes the various modes of finding wells of water, he says nothing about the divining wand. The isolated texts from Scripture which are usually referred to clearly indicate wands of a different sort, if we except Hosea iv. 12, the passage used as motto by the author of *Lettres qui découvrent l'illusion des Philosophes sur la Baguette* (1696). The text is translated in our Bible, "My people ask counsel at their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them." Now, we have here no reference to the search for wells and minerals, but to a form of divination for which the modern twig has ceased to be applied. In rural England people use the wand to find water, but not to give advice, or to detect thieves or murderers; but, as we shall see, the rod has been very much used for these purposes within the last three centuries.

This brings us to the moral powers of the twig; and here we find some assistance in our inquiry from the practices of uncivilised races. In 1719 John Bell was travelling across Asia; he fell in with a Russian merchant, who told him of a custom common among the Mongols. The Russian had lost certain pieces of cloth, which were stolen out of his tent. The Kutuchtu Lama ordered the proper steps to be taken to find out the thief.

One of the Lamas took a bench with four feet, and, after turning it in several directions, at last it pointed directly to the tent where the stolen goods were concealed. The Lama now mounted across the bench, and soon carried it, or, as was commonly believed, it carried him, to the very tent, where he ordered the damask to be produced. The demand was directly complied with; for it is vain in such cases to offer any excuse.²

Here we have not a wand, indeed, but a wooden object which turned in the direction not of water or minerals, but

¹ Preller, *Ausgewählte Aufsätze*, p. 154.

² Tylor, *Prim. Cult.*, ii. 156. Pinkerton, vii. 357.

of human guilt. A better instance is given by the Rev. H. Rowley, in his account of the Mauganja.¹ A thief had stolen some corn. The medicine-man, or sorcerer, produced two sticks, which he gave to four young men, two holding each stick. The medicine-man danced and sang a magical incantation, while a zebra-tail and a rattle were shaken over the holders of the sticks.

After a while, the men with the sticks had spasmodic twitchings of the arms and legs; these increased nearly to convulsions.....According to the native idea, *it was the sticks which were possessed primarily*, and through them the men, *who could hardly hold them*. The sticks whirled and dragged the men round and round like mad, through bush and thorny shrub, and over every obstacle; nothing stopped them; their bodies were torn and bleeding. At last they came back to the assembly, whirled round again, and rushed down the path to fall panting and exhausted in the hut of one of a chief's wives. The sticks, rolling to her very feet, denounced her as a thief. She denied it; but the medicine-man answered, "The spirit has declared her guilty; the spirit never lies."

The woman, however, was acquitted, after a proxy trial by ordeal: a cock, used as her proxy, threw up the *muavi*, or ordeal-poison.

Here the points to be noted are, first, the violent movement of the sticks, which the men could hardly hold; next, the physical agitation of the men. The former point is illustrated by the confession of a civil engineer writing in the *Times*. This gentleman had seen the rod successfully used for water; he was asked to try it himself, and he determined that it should not twist in his hands "if an ocean rolled under his feet." Twist it did, however, in spite of all his efforts to hold it, when he came above a concealed spring. Another example is quoted in the *Quarterly Review*, vol. xxii., p. 374. A narrator, in whom the editor "had implicit

confidence," mentions how, when a lady held the twig just over a hidden well, "the twig turned so quick as to snap, breaking near her fingers." There seems to be no indiscretion in saying, as the statement has often been printed before, that the lady spoken of in the *Quarterly Review* was Lady Millbanke, mother of the wife of Byron. Dr. Hutton, the geologist, is quoted as a witness of her success in the search for water with the divining rod. He says that, in an experiment at Woolwich, "the twigs twisted themselves off below her fingers, which were considerably indented by so forcibly holding the rods between them."² Next, the violent excitement of the four young men of the Mauganja is paralleled by the physical experience of the lady quoted in the *Quarterly Review*. "A degree of agitation was visible in her face when she first made the experiment; she says this agitation was great" when she began to practise the art, or whatever we are to call it. Again, in *Lettres qui découvrent l'illusion* (p. 93), we read that Jacques Aymar (who discovered the Lyons murderer in 1692) *se sent tout ému*—feels greatly agitated—when he comes on that of which he is in search. On page 97 of the same volume the body of the man who holds the divining rod is described as "violently agitated." When Aymar entered the room where the murder, to be described later, was committed, "his pulse rose as if he were in a burning fever, and the wand turned rapidly in his hands" (*Lettres*, p. 107). But the most singular parallel to the performance of the African wizard must be quoted from a curious pamphlet already referred to, a translation of the old French *Verge de Jacob*, written, annotated, and published by a Mr. Thomas Welton. Mr. Welton seems to have been a believer in mesmerism, animal magnetism, and similar doctrines; but the coincidence of his story with that of the African sorcerer is none the less

¹ *Universities Mission to Central Africa*, p. 217. *Prim. Cult.*, ii. 156, 157.

² Quoted in *Jacob's Rod*: London, n.d., a translation of *La Verge de Jacob*, Lyon, 1693.

remarkable. It is a coincidence which must almost certainly be "undesigned." Mr. Welton's wife was what modern occult philosophers call a "Sensitive." In 1851 he wished her to try an experiment with the rod in a garden, and sent a maid-servant to bring "a certain stick that stood behind the parlour door. In great terror she brought it to the garden, her hand firmly clutched on the stick, nor could she let go....." The stick was given to Mrs. Welton, "and it drew her with very considerable force to nearly the centre of the garden, to a bed of poppies, where she stopped." Here water was found, and the gardener, who had given up his lease as there was no well in the garden, had the lease renewed.

We began by giving evidence to show (and much more might be adduced) that the belief in the divining rod, or in analogous instruments, is not confined to the European races. The superstition, or whatever we are to call it, produces the same effects of physical agitation, and the use of the rod is accompanied with similar phenomena, among Mongols, English people, Frenchmen, and the natives of Central Africa. The same coincidences are found in almost all superstitious practices, and in the effects of these practices on believers. The Chinese use a form of *planchette*, which is half a divining rod—a branch of the peach-tree; and "spiritualism" is more than three-quarters of the religion of most savage tribes, a Maori *seance* being more impressive than anything the civilised Sludge can offer his credulous patrons. From these facts different people draw different inferences. Believers say that the wide distribution of their favourite mysteries is a proof that "there is something in them." The incredulous look on our modern "twigs" and turning-tables and ghost stories as mere "survivals" from the stage of savage culture, or want of culture, when the fancy of half-starved man was active and his reason uncritical.

The great authority for the modern

history of the divining rod is a work published by M. Chevreul, in Paris, in 1854. M. Chevreul, probably with truth, regarded the wand as much on a par with the turning-tables, which, in 1854, attracted a good deal of attention. He studied the topic historically, and his book, with a few accessible French tracts and letters of the seventeenth century, must here be our guide. A good deal of M. Chevreul's learning, it should be said, is reproduced in Mr. Baring Gould's *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, but the French author is much more exhaustive in his treatment of the topic. M. Chevreul could find no earlier book on the twig than the *Testament du Frère Basil Valentin*, a holy man who flourished (the twig) about 1413, but whose treatise is possibly apocryphal. According to Basil Valentin, the twig was regarded with awe by ignorant labouring men, which is still true. Paracelsus, though he has a reputation for magical daring, thought the use of the twig "uncertain and unlawful"; and Agricola, in his *De Re Metallica* (1546), expresses a good deal of scepticism about the use of the rod in mining. A traveller of 1554 found that the wand was *not* used—and this seems to have surprised him—in the mines of Macedonia. Most of the writers of the sixteenth century accounted for the turning of the rod by "sympathy," which was then as favourite an explanation of everything as evolution is to-day. In 1630 the Baron de Beau Soleil of Bohemia (his name sounds rather Bohemian) came to France with his wife, and made much use of the rod in the search for water and minerals. The Baroness wrote a little volume on the subject, afterwards reprinted in a great storehouse of this lore, *La Physique Occulte*, of Vallemont. Kircher, a Jesuit, made experiments which came to nothing; but Gaspard Schott, a learned writer, cautiously declined to say that the Devil was always "at the bottom of it" when the rod turned successfully. The problem of the rod

was placed before our own Royal Society by Boyle, in 1666; but the Society was not more successful here than in dealing with the philosophical difficulty proposed by Charles II. In 1679 De Saint Romain, deserting the old hypothesis of secret "sympathies," explained the motion of the rod (supposing it to move) by the action of *corpuscles*. From this time the question became the playing-ground of the Cartesian and other philosophers. The struggle was between theories of "atoms," magnetism, "corpuscles," electric effluvia, and so forth, on one side, and the immediate action of devils or of conscious imposture, on the other. The controversy, comparatively simple as long as the rod only indicated hidden water or minerals, was complicated by the revival of the savage belief that the wand could "smell out" moral offences. As long as the twig turned over material objects, you could imagine sympathies and "effluvia" at pleasure. But when the wand twirled over the scene of a murder, or dragged the expert after the traces of the culprit, fresh explanations were wanted. Le Brun wrote to Malebranche on July 8th, 1689, to tell him that the wand only turned over what the holder had the *intention* of discovering.¹ If he were following a murderer, the wand good-naturedly refused to distract him by turning over hidden water. On the other hand, Vallemont says that, when a peasant was using the wand to find water, it turned over a spot in a wood where a murdered woman was buried, and it conducted the peasant to the murderer's house. These events seem inconsistent with Le Brun's theory of *intention*. Malebranche replied, in effect, that he had only heard of the turning of the wand over water and minerals; that it then turned (if turn it did) by virtue of some such force as electricity; that, if such force existed, the wand would turn over open water. But it does not so turn; and, as physical causes are

constant, it follows that the turning of the rod cannot be the result of a physical cause. The only other explanation is an intelligent cause—either the will of an impostor or the action of a spirit. Good spirits would not meddle with such matters; therefore, either the Devil or an impostor causes the motion of the rod, if it *does* move at all. This logic of Malebranche's is not agreeable to believers in the twig; but there the controversy stood till, in 1692, Jacques Aymar, a peasant of Dauphiné, by the use of the twig discovered one of the Lyons murderers.

Though the story of this singular event is pretty well known, it must here be briefly repeated. No affair can be better authenticated, and our version is abridged from the "Relations" of "Monsieur le Procureur du Roi, Monsieur l'Abbé de la Garde, Monsieur Panthot, Doyen des Médecins de Lyon, et Monsieur Aubert, Avocat célèbre."

On July 5th, 1692, a vintner and his wife were found dead in the cellar of their shop at Lyons. They had been killed by blows from a hedging-knife, and their money had been stolen. The culprits could not be discovered, and a neighbour took upon him to bring to Lyons a peasant out of Dauphiné, named Jacques Aymar, a man noted for his skill with the divining rod. The Lieutenant-Criminel and the Procureur du Roi took Aymar into the cellar, furnishing him with a rod of the first wood that came to hand. According to the Procureur du Roi, the rod did not move till Aymar reached the very spot where the crime had been committed. His pulse then rose, and the wand twisted rapidly. "Guided by the wand, or by some internal sensation," Aymar now pursued the track of the assassins, entered the court of the Archbishop's palace, left the town by the bridge over the Rhone, and followed the right bank of the river. He reached a gardener's house, which he declared the men had entered; and some children confessed that three men (*whom they*

¹ *Letters sur la Baguette*, pp. 106-12.

described) had come into the house one Sunday morning. Aymar followed the track up the river, pointed out all the places where the men had landed, and, to make a long story short, stopped at last at the door of the prison of Beaucaire. He was admitted, looked at the prisoners, and picked out as the murderer a little hunchback (had the children described a hunchback?) who had just been brought in for a small theft. The hunchback was taken to Lyons, and he was recognised on the way by the people at all the stages where he had stopped. At Lyons he was examined in the usual manner, and confessed that he had been an accomplice in the crime, and had guarded the door. Aymar pursued the other culprits to the coast, followed them by sea, landed where they had landed, and only desisted from his search when they crossed the frontier. As for the hunchback, he was broken on the wheel, being condemned on his own confession. It does not appear that he was put to the torture to make him confess. If this had been done, his admissions would, of course, have been as valueless as those of the victims in trials for witchcraft.

This is, in brief, the history of the famous Lyons murders. It must be added that many experiments were made with Aymar in Paris, and that they were all failures. He fell into every trap that was set for him; detected thieves who were innocent, failed to detect the guilty, and invented absurd excuses; alleging, for example, that the rod would not indicate a murderer who had confessed, or who was drunk when he committed his crime. These excuses seem to annihilate the wild contemporary theory of Chauvin and others, that the body of a murderer naturally exhales an invisible *matière meurtrière*—peculiar indestructible atoms, which may be detected by the expert with the rod. Something like the same theory, we believe, has been used to explain the pretended phenomena of haunted houses. But the wildest philosophical credulity is staggered by a *matière meurtrière* which

is disengaged by the body of a sober, but not by that of an intoxicated, murderer, which survives tempests in the air, and endures for many years, but is dissipated the moment the murderer confesses. Believers in Aymar have conjectured that his real powers were destroyed by the excitements of Paris, and that he took to imposture; but this is an effort of too easy good-nature. When Vallemont defended Aymar (1693) in the book called *La Physique Occulte*, he declared that Aymar was physically affected to an unpleasant extent by *matière meurtrière*, but was not thus agitated when he used the rod to discover minerals. We have seen that, if modern evidence can be trusted, holders of the rod are occasionally much agitated even when they are only in search of wells. The story gave rise to a prolonged controversy, and the case remains a judicial puzzle, but little elucidated by the confession of the hunchback, who may have been insane, or morbid, or vexed by constant questioning till he was weary of his life. He was only nineteen years of age.

The next use of the rod was very much like that of "tipping" and turning tables. Experts held it (as did Le Père Ménestrier, 1694), questions were asked, and the wand answered by turning in various directions. By way of showing the inconsistency of all philosophies of the wand, it may be said that one girl found that it turned over concealed gold if she held gold in her hand, while another found that it indicated the metal so long as she did *not* carry gold with her in the quest. In the search for water, ecclesiastics were particularly fond of using the rod. The Maréchal de Boufflers dug many wells, and found no water, on the indications of a rod in the hands of the Prieur de Dorenic, near Guise. In 1700 a curé, near Toulouse, used the wand to answer questions, which, like *planchette*, it often answered wrongly. The great *sourcier*, or water-finder, of the eighteenth century was one Bleton. He declared that the

rod was a mere index, and that physical sensations of the searcher communicated themselves to the wand. This is the reverse of the African theory, that the stick is inspired, while the men who hold it are only influenced by the stick. On the whole, Bleton's idea seems the less absurd; but Bleton himself often failed when watched with scientific care by the incredulous. Paramelle, who wrote on methods of discovering wells, in 1856, came to the conclusion that the wand turns in the hands of certain individuals of peculiar temperament, and that it is very much a matter of chance whether there are or are not wells in the places where it turns.

If there are no phenomena of this sort at all, it is remarkable that the belief in them is so widely diffused. But if the phenomena are purely subjective, owing to the conscious or unconscious action of nervous patients, then they are precisely of the sort which the cunning medicine-man observes, and makes his profit out of, even in the earliest stages of society. Once introduced, these practices never die out among the conservative and unprogressive class of peasants; and every now and then they attract the curiosity of philosophers, or win the belief of the credulous among the educated classes. Then comes, as we have lately seen, a revival of ancient superstition. For it were as easy to pluck the comet out of the sky by the tail as to eradicate superstition from the mind of man.

Perhaps one good word may be said for the divining rod. Considering the chances it has enjoyed, the rod has done less mischief than might have been expected. It might very well have become in Europe, as in Asia and Africa, a kind of ordeal, or method of searching for and trying malefactors. Men like Jacques Aymar might have played, on a larger scale, the part of Hopkins, the witch-finder. Aymar was, indeed, employed by some young men to point out, by help of the wand, the houses of ladies who had been more

frail than faithful. But at the end of the seventeenth century, in France, this research was not regarded with favour, and put the final touch on the discomfiture of Aymar. So far as we know, the hunchback of Lyons was the only victim of the "twig" who ever suffered in civilised society. It is true that in rural England the movements of a Bible, suspended like a pendulum, have been thought to point out the guilty. But even that evidence is not held good enough to go to a jury. Since this sketch was written the great work on *The So-called Divining Rod*, by Professor W. T. Barrett, has superseded the previous studies.¹ Mr. Barrett's book contains an excellent history of the rod in the past. It is peculiarly piquant to find that the violent "anti-clerical" and eminent palæontologist, Monsieur de Mortillet, was himself a "dowser," and exercised a faculty for which he could not account. Mr. Barrett gives a large account of experiments, mainly in water-findings, by professionals and amateurs, to which (in the case of amateurs) I could add freely. In my experience (or rather according to my information at first hand) the amateurs find not only water, but almost anything, including the tracks of human beings, which they set themselves to seek. Mr. Barrett made especial inquiry for *failures* by water-seekers, and considers them carefully. In his opinion the movement of the rod (or the sensation, when the rod is used) is caused by involuntary and unconscious muscular movements, automatically betraying and indicating knowledge existing in the sub-consciousness. How the knowledge reached the sub-consciousness is another question. The rod, in fact, is only one mode of stimulating "automatisms," and bringing to the surface evidence of faculties concealed in "the abysmal depths of personality." Other methods are automatic writing, crystal-gazing, and modes known

¹ *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research.*

to savages, such as boat-tilting on water. As regards unconscious muscular action, the divining rod once kicked up in my own hands, *against* all the muscular pressure of which I was conscious. What muscles worked it against the muscles which I knew that I was exerting; I cannot conceive.

The rod has been much used for water-finding by corporations, companies, colleges, landowners, and other persons who say that, whatever the system of the process, the water-finder "gets there all the same," and, as long as he does so,

they do not care how he managed it. In cases known to me, a squire, a land agent, and a ground bailiff, under pressure of demand for water, have tried the rod themselves, with singular success. It happens, not infrequently, that if an expert holds the wrists of a neophyte, who holds the rod, the rod turns in the neophyte's hands. This may be attributed, in a general way, to suggestion; neither this process nor the traditional Celtic way of communicating the vision in second sight has so far succeeded in my own case.

VIII.

THE ART OF SAVAGES¹

"AVOID Coleridge—he is *useless*," says Mr. Ruskin. Why should the poetry of Coleridge be useful? The question may interest the critic, but we are only concerned with Mr. Ruskin here—for one reason. His disparagement of Coleridge as "useless" is a survival of the belief that art should be "useful." This is the savage's view of art. He imitates nature in dance, song, or in plastic art, for a definite practical purpose. His dances are magical dances, his images are made for a magical purpose, his songs are incantations. Thus the theory that art is a disinterested expression of the imitative faculty is scarcely warranted by the little we know of art's beginnings. We shall adopt, provisionally, the hypothesis that the earliest art with which we are acquainted is that of savages, contemporary or extinct. Some philosophers may tell us that all known savages are only

degraded descendants of early civilised men, who have, unluckily and inexplicably, left no relics of their civilisation. But we shall argue, on the opposite theory, that the art of Australians, for example, is really earlier in kind, more backward, nearer the rude beginnings of things, than the art of people who have attained to some skill in pottery, like the New Caledonians. These, again, are much more backward, in a state really much earlier, than the old races of Mexico and Peru; while they, in turn, show but a few traces of advance towards the art of Egypt; and the art of Egypt, at least after the times of the Ancient Empire, is scarcely advancing in the direction of the flawless art of Greece. We shall be able to show how savage art, as of the Australians, develops into barbarous art, as of the New Zealanders; while the arts of strange civilisations like those of Peru and Mexico advance one step further; and how, again, in the early art of Greece, in the Greek art of ages prior to Pericles, there are remains of barbaric forms which are gradually softened into beauty. But

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there are necessarily breaks and solutions of continuity in the path of progress.

One of the oldest problems has already risen before us in connection with the question stated: Is art the gratification of the imitative faculty? Now, among the lowest, the most untutored, the worst equipped savages of contemporary races, art is rather decorative on the whole than imitative. The patterns on Australian shields and clubs, the scars which they raise on their own flesh by way of tattooing, are not recognisable imitations of any objects in nature. The Australians, like the Red Indians, like many African and some aboriginal Indian races, Peruvians, and others, distinguish their families by the names of various plants and animals, from which each family boasts its descent. Thus you have a family called Kangaroos, descended, as they fancy, from the kangaroo; another from the cockatoo, another from the black snake, and so forth. Now, in many quarters of the globe, this custom and this superstition, combined with the imitative faculty in man, has produced a form of art representing the objects from which the families claim descent. This art is a sort of rude heraldry—probably the origin of heraldry. Thus, if a Red Indian—say a Delaware—is of the family of the

Turtle, he blazons a turtle on his shield or coat, probably tattoos or paints his breast with a figure of a turtle; and always has a turtle, *reversed*, designed on the pillar above his grave when he dies, just as, in our mediæval chronicles, the leopards of an English king are reversed on his scutcheon opposite the record of his death. But the Australians, to the best of my knowledge, though they are much governed by belief in descent from animals, do not blazon recognisable objects on their flesh, nor on the trees near the place where the dead are buried. They have not arrived at this pitch of imitative art, though they have invented or inherited a kind of runes which they notch

on sticks, and in which they convey to each other secret messages. The natives of the Upper Darling, however, do carve their family crests on their shields. In place of using imitative art, the Murri are said—I am not quite sure with what truth—to indicate the distinction of families by arrangements of patterns, lines, and dots tattooed on the breast and arms, and carved on the bark of trees near places of burial. In any case, the absence of the rude imitative art of heraldry among a race which possesses all the social conditions that produce this art is a fact worth noticing, and itself proves that the native art of one of the most backward races we know is not essentially imitative.

Anyone who will look through a collection of Australian weapons and utensils will be brought to this conclusion. The shields and the clubs are elaborately

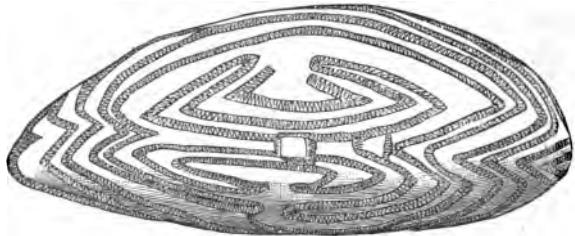


FIG. 1.—An Australian Shield.

worked, but almost always without any representation of plants, animals, or the human figure. As a rule, the decorations take the simple shape of the "herring-bone" pattern, or such other patterns as can be produced without the aid of spirals, or curves, or circles. There is a natural and necessary cause of this choice of decoration. The Australians, working on hard wood, with tools made of flint, or broken glass, or sharp shell, cannot easily produce any curved lines. Everyone who, when a boy, carved his name on the bark of a tree remembers the difficulty he had with S and G, while he got on easily with letters like M and A, which consist of straight or inclined

lines. The savage artist has the same difficulty with his rude tools in producing anything like satisfactory curves or spirals. We engrave above (Fig. 1) a shield on which an Australian has succeeded, with obvious difficulty, in producing concentric ovals of irregular shape. It may be that the artist would have produced perfect circles if he could. His

decorative art—the forms which survive under the names of “chevron” and “herring-bone.” These can be scratched on clay with the nails, or a sharp stick; and this primæval way of decorating pottery made without the wheel survives, with other relics of savage art, in the western isles of Scotland. The Australian had not even learned to make rude clay pipkins, but he decorated his shields as the old Celts and modern old Scotch women decorated their clay pots, with the herring-bone arrangement of incised lines. In the matter of colour the Australians prefer white clay and red ochre, which they rub into the chinks in the woodwork of their shields. When they are determined on an ambush they paint themselves all over with white, justly conceiving that their sudden apparition in this guise will strike terror into the boldest hearts. But arrangements in black and white of this sort scarcely deserve the name of even rudimentary art.

The Australians sometimes introduce crude decorative attempts at designing the human figure, as in the pointed shield opposite (Fig. 2, *a*), which, with the other Australian designs, are from Mr. Brough Smyth's *Aborigines of Victoria*. But these ambitious efforts usually end in failure. Though the Australians chiefly confine themselves to decorative art, there are numbers of wall-paintings, so to speak, in the caves of the country which prove that they, like the Bushmen, could design the human figure in action when they pleased. Their usual preference for the employment of patterns appears to me to be the result of the nature of their materials. In modern art our mechanical advantages and facilities are so great that we are always carrying the method and manner of one art over the frontier of another. Our poetry aims at producing the effects of music; our prose at producing the effects of poetry. Our sculpture tries to vie with painting in the representation of action, or with lace-making in the production of reticulated surfaces, an

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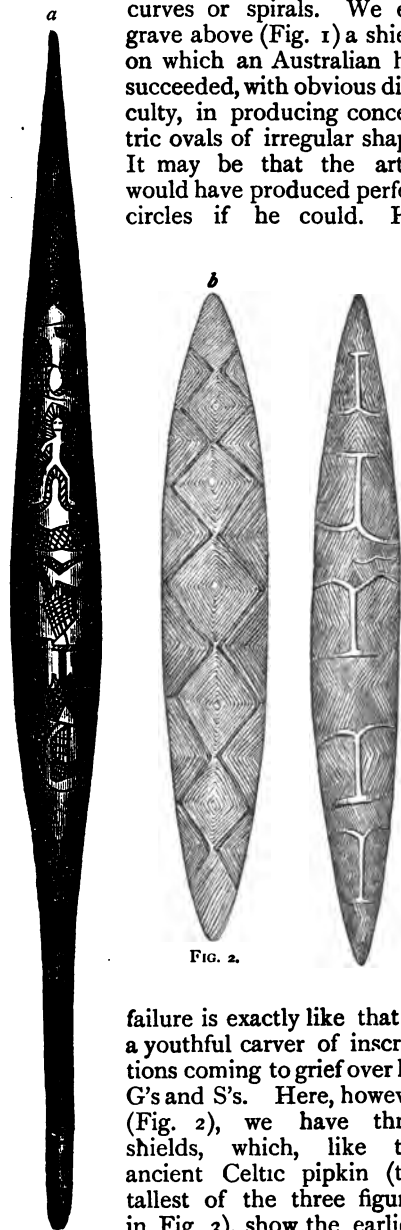


FIG. 2.

failure is exactly like that of a youthful carver of inscriptions coming to grief over his G's and S's. Here, however (Fig. 2), we have three shields, which, like the ancient Celtic pipkin (the tallest of the three figures in Fig. 3), show the earliest known form of savage

forth. But the savage, in his art, has sense enough to confine himself to the sort of work for which his materials are

and he confines himself to decorative scratches. Place the black in the large cave which Pundjel, the Australian Zeus,



FIG. 3- Savage Ornamentation.

fitted. Set him in the bush, with no implements and materials but a bit of broken shell and a lump of hard wood,

inhabited when on earth (as Zeus inhabited the cave in Crete), and give the black plenty of red and white ochre and

charcoal, and he will paint the human figure in action on the rocky walls. Later we will return to the cave-paintings of the Australians and the Bushmen in South Africa. At present we must trace purely decorative art a little further. But we must remember that there was once a race apparently in much the same social condition as the Australians, but far more advanced and ingenious in art. The earliest men of



FIG. 4.—An Australian Stele.

the men whose bones and whose weapons are found beneath the gravel-drift, the men who were contemporary with the rhinoceros, mammoth, and cave-bear — were not further advanced in material civilisation than the Australians. They used weapons of bone, of unpolished stone, and probably of hard wood. But the remnants of their art, the scraps of mammoth or reindeer bone in our museums, prove that they had a most spirited

style of sketching from the life. In a collection of drawings on bone (probably designed with a flint or a shell), drawings by palæolithic man, in the British Museum, I have only observed one purely decorative attempt. Even in this the decoration resembles an effort to use the outlines of foliage for ornamental purposes. In almost all the other cases the palæolithic artist has not decorated his bits of bone in the usual savage manner, but has treated his bone as an artist treats his sketch-book, and has scratched outlines of beasts and fishes with his sharp shell as an artist uses his point. These ancient bones, in short, are the sketch-books of European savages, whose untaught skill was far greater than that of the Australians, or even of the Eskimo. When brought into contact with Europeans, the Australian and Eskimo very quickly, even without regular teaching, learn to draw with some spirit and skill. In the Australian 'stele, or grave-pillar, which we have engraved (Fig. 4), the shapeless figures below the men and animals are the dead, and the *boilyas* or ghosts. Observe the patterns in the interstices. The artist had lived with Europeans. In their original conditions, however, the Australians have not attained to such free, artist-like, and unhampered use of their rude materials as the mysterious European artists who drew the mammoth that walked abroad among them.

We have engraved one solitary Australian attempt at drawing curved lines. The New Zealanders, a race far more highly endowed, and, when Europeans arrived among them, already far more civilised than the Australians, had, like the Australians, no metal implements. But their stone weapons were harder and keener, and with these they engraved the various spirals and coils on hard wood, of which we give examples here. It is sometimes said that New Zealand culture and art have filtered from some Asiatic source, and that in the coils and spirals designed, as in our engravings, on the face of the Maori chief, or on his wooden furniture, there may be found debased Asiatic influences.¹ This is one of the questions which we can hardly deal with here.

¹ Part of the pattern (Fig. 5, *b*) recurs on the New Zealand Bull-roarer, engraved in the Essay on the Bull-roarer.

Perhaps its solution requires more of knowledge, anthropological and linguistic, than is at present within the reach of any student. Assuredly, the races of the

resemblance, to be accounted for by the development of a crude early idea, may be traced most easily in the early pottery of Greece. No one says that the Greeks borrowed from the civilised people of America. Only a few enthusiasts say that the civilised peoples of America, especially the Peruvians, are Aryan by race. Yet the remains of Peruvian palaces are often by no means dissimilar in style from the "Pelagic" and "Cyclopean" buildings of gigantic stones which remain on such ancient Hellenic sites as Argos and Mycenæ. The probability is that men living in similar social conditions, and using similar implements, have unconsciously and unintentionally arrived at like results.

Few people who are interested in the question can afford to visit Peru and Mycenæ and study the architecture for themselves. But anyone who is interested in the strange identity



FIG. 5.—*a*, A Maori Design; *b*, Tattoo on a Maori's Face.

earth have wandered far, and have been wonderfully intermixed, and have left the traces of their passage here and there on sculptured stones, and in the keeping of the ghosts that haunt ancient gravesteads. But when two pieces of artistic work, one civilised, one savage, resemble each other, it is always dangerous to suppose that the resemblance bears witness to relationship or contact between the races, or to influences imported by one from the other. New Zealand work may be Asiatic in origin, and debased by the effect of centuries of lower civilisation and ruder implements. Or Asiatic ornament may be a form of art improved out of ruder forms, like those to which the New Zealanders have already attained. One is sometimes almost tempted to regard the favourite Maori spiral as an imitation of the form, not unlike that of a bishop's crozier at the top, taken by the great native ferns. Examples of

of the human mind everywhere, and in the necessary forms of early art, can go to the British Museum and examine the American and early Greek pottery. Compare the Greek key pattern and the wave pattern on Greek and Mexican vases, and compare the bird faces, or human faces very like those of birds, with the similar faces on the clay pots which Dr. Schliemann dug up at Troy. The latter are engraved in his book on Troy.

Compare the so-called "cuttle-fish" from a Peruvian jar with the same figure on the early

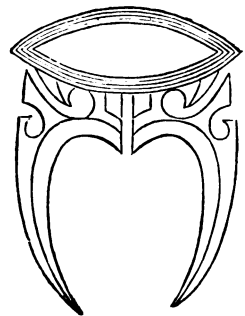


FIG. 6.—From a Maori's Face.

Greek vases, most of which are to be found in the last of the classical vase-rooms upstairs. Once more, compare the little clay "whorls" of the Mexican and Peruvian room with those which Dr. Schliemann found so numerous at Hissarlik. The conviction becomes irresistible that all these objects—in shape, in purpose, in character of decoration—are the same, because the mind and the materials of men, in their early stages of civilisation especially, are the same everywhere. You might introduce old Greek bits of clay-work, figures or vases, into a Peruvian collection, or might foist Mexican objects among the clay treasures of Hissarlik, and the wisest archæologist would be deceived. The Greek fret pattern especially seems to be one of the earliest that men learnt

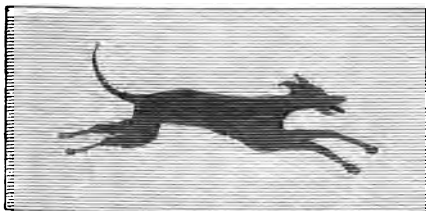


FIG. 7.—Bushman Dog.

to draw. The *svastika*, as it is called, the cross with lines at right angles to each limb, is found everywhere—in India, Greece, Scotland, Peru—as a natural bit of ornament. The allegorising fancy of the Indians gave it a mystic meaning, and the learned have built I know not what worlds of religious theories on this "pre-Christian cross," which is probably a piece of hasty decorative work, with no original mystic meaning at all.¹ Ornaments of this sort were transferred from wood or bone to clay, almost as soon as people learned that early art, the potter's, to which the Australians have not attained, though it was familiar to the not distant people of

New Caledonia. The style of spirals and curves, again, once acquired (as it was by the New Zealanders), became the favourite of some races, especially of the Celtic. Anyone who will study either the ornaments of Mycenæ, or those of any old Scotch or Irish collection, will readily recognise in that art the development of a system of ornament like that of the Maoris. Classical Greece, on the other hand, followed more in the track of the ancient system of straight and slanted lines, and we do not find in the later Greek art that love of interlacing coils and spirals which is so remarkable among the Celts, and which is very manifest in the ornaments of the Mycenæan hoards—that is, perhaps, of the ancient Greek heroic age. The causes of these differences in the development of ornament, the causes that made Celtic genius follow one track, and pursue to its æsthetic limits one early *motif*, while classical art went on a severer line, it is, perhaps, impossible at present to ascertain. But it is plain enough that later art has done little more than develop ideas of ornament already familiar to untutored races.

It has been shown that the art which aims at decoration is better adapted to both the purposes and materials of savages than the art which aims at representation. As a rule, the materials of the lower savages are their own bodies (which they naturally desire to make beautiful for ever by tattooing), and the hard substances of which they fashion their tools and weapons. These hard substances, when worked on with cutting instruments of stone or shell, are most easily adorned with straight cut lines, and spirals are therefore found to be, on the whole, a comparatively late form of ornament.

We have now to discuss the efforts of the savage to represent. Here, again, we have to consider the purpose which animates him, and the materials which are at his service. His pictures have a practical purpose, and do not spring from what we are apt, perhaps too

¹ See Schliemann's *Troja*, wherein is much learning and fancy about the Aryan Svastika.

hastily, to consider the innate love of imitation for its own sake. In modern art, in modern times, no doubt the desire to imitate nature, by painting or sculpture, has become almost an innate impulse, an inborn instinct. But there must be some "reason why" for this; and it does not seem at all unlikely that we inherit the love, the disinterested love, of imitative art from very remote ancestors, whose habits of imitation had a direct, interested, and practical purpose. The member of Parliament who mimics the crowing of a cock during debate, or the street boy who beguiles his leisure by barking like a dog, has a disinterested pleasure in the exercise of his skill; but advanced thinkers seem pretty well agreed that the first men who imitated the voices of dogs, and cocks, and other animals, did not do so merely for fun, but with the practical purpose of indicating to their companions the approach of these creatures. Such were the rude beginnings of human language; and, whether that theory be correct or not, there are certainly practical reasons which impel the savage to attempt imitative art. I doubt if there are many savage races which do not use representative art for the purposes of writing—that is, to communicate information to persons whom they cannot reach by the voice, and to assist the memory, which, in a savage, is perhaps not very strong. To take examples. A savage man meets a savage maid. She does not speak his language, nor he hers. How are they to know whether, according to the marriage laws of their race, they are lawful mates for each other? This important question is settled by an inspection of their tattooed marks. If a Thlinkeet man of the Swan stock meets an Iroquois maid of the Swan stock, they cannot speak to each other, and the "gesture-language" is cumbrous. But if both are tattooed with the swan, then the man knows that this daughter of the swan is not for him. He could no more marry her than Helen of Troy could have married Castor, the tamer of

horses. Both are children of the Swan, as were Helen and Castor, and must regard each other as brother and sister. The case of the Thlinkeet man and the Iroquois maid is extremely unlikely to occur; but I give it as an example of the practical use, among savages, of representative art.

Among the uses of art for conveying intelligence we notice that even the Australians have what the Greeks would call the *σκυτάλη*; a staff on which inscriptions, legible to the Aborigines, are engraven. I believe, however, that the Australian *σκυτάλη* is not usually marked with picture-writing, but with notches—even more difficult to decipher. As an example of Red Indian picture-writing we publish a scroll from Kohl's book on the natives of North America. This rude work of art, though the reader may think little of it, is really a document as important in its way as the Chaldean clay tablets inscribed with the record of the Deluge. The coarsely-drawn figures recall, to the artist's mind, much of the myth of Manabozho, the Prometheus and the Deucalion, the Cain and the Noah, of the dwellers by the great lake. Manabozho was a great chief, who had two wives that quarrelled. The two stumpy half-figures (4) represent the wives; the mound between them is the displeasure of Manabozho. Further on (5) you see him caught up between two trees—an unpleasant fix, from which the wolves and squirrels refused to extricate him. The kind of pyramid with a figure at top (8) is a mountain, on which, when the flood came, Manabozho placed his grandmother to be out of the water's way. The somewhat similar object is Manabozho himself, on the top of his mountain. The animals you next behold (10) were sent out by Manabozho to ascertain how the deluge was faring, and to carry messages to his grandmother. This scroll was drawn, probably on birch bark, by a Red Man of literary attainments, who gave it to Kohl (in its lower right-hand corner [11] he has pictured the event), that he might never forget the

story of the Manabozhian deluge. The Red Indians have always, as far as European knowledge goes, been in the habit of using this picture-writing for the purpose of retaining their legends, poems, and incantations. It is unnecessary to say that the picture-writing of Mexico

the artist who recorded the Manabozhian legend, when they please.

In addition to picture-writing, religion has fostered savage representative art. If a man worships a lizard or a bear, he finds it convenient to have an amulet or idol representing a bear or a lizard. If one adores a lizard or a bear, one is likely to think that prayer and acts of worship addressed to an image of the animal will please the animal himself, and make him propitious. Thus the art of making little portable figures of various worshipful beings is fostered, and the craft of working in wood or ivory is born. As a rule, the savage is satisfied with excessively rude representations of his gods. Objects of this kind—rude hewn blocks of stone and wood—were the most sacred effigies of the gods in Greece, and were kept in the dimmest recesses of the temple. No Demeter wrought by the craft of Phidias would have appeared so holy to the Phigalians as the strange old figure of the goddess with the head of a mare. The earliest Greek sacred sculptures that remain are scarcely, if at all, more advanced in art than the idols of the naked Admiralty Islanders. But this is anticipating; in the meantime it may be said that among the sources of savage representative art are the need of something like writing, and ideas suggested by nascent religion.

The singular war-picture (Fig. 9) from a cave in South Africa, which we copy from the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, probably represents a magical ceremony. Bushmen are tempting a great water animal—a rhinoceros, or something of that sort—to run across the land, for the purpose of producing rain. The connection of ideas is scarcely apparent to civilised minds, but it is not more indistinct than the connection between carrying a bit of the rope with which a man has been hanged and success at cards—a common French superstition.



FIG. 8.—Red Indian Picture-writing : the Legend of Manabozho.

and the hieroglyphics of ancient Egypt are derived from the same savage processes. I must observe that the hasty indications of the figure used in picture-writing are by no means to be regarded as measures of the Red Men's skill in art. They can draw much better than

The Bushman cave-pictures, like those of Australia, are painted in black, red, and white. Savages, like the Assyrians and the early Greeks, and like children, draw animals much better than the human figure. The Bushman dog in our little engraving (Fig. 7) is all alive—almost as full of life as the dog which accompanies the centaur Chiron, in that beautiful vase in the British Museum which represents the fostering of Achilles. The Bushman wall-paintings, like those of Australia, seem to prove that savage art is capable of considerable freedom, when supplied with fitting materials. Men seem to draw better when they have pigments and a flat surface of rock to work upon than when they are scratching on hard wood with a sharp edge of a broken shell. Though the thing has little to do with art, it may be worth mentioning, as a matter of curiosity, that the labyrinthine Australian caves are decorated, here and there, with the mark of a red hand. The same mysterious, or at least unexplained, red hand is impressed on the walls of the ruined palaces and temples of Yucatan—the work of a vanished people.

There is one singular fact in the history of savage art which reminds us that savages, like civilised men, have various degrees of culture and various artistic capacities. The oldest inhabitants of Europe, who have left any traces of their lives and handiwork, must have been savages. Their tools and weapons were not even formed of polished stone, but of rough-hewn flint. The people who used tools of this sort must necessarily have enjoyed but a scanty mechanical equipment, and the life they lived in caves, from which they had to drive the cave-bear, and among snows, where

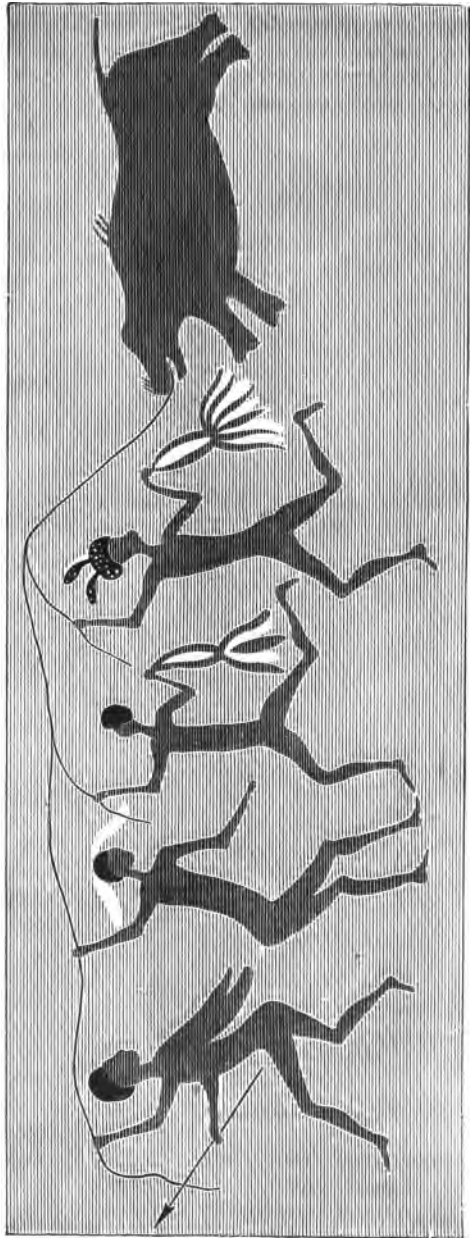


FIG. 9.—Bushman Wall-painting.

they stalked the reindeer and the mammoth, must have been very rough. These earliest-known Europeans, "palæolithic men," as they are called, from their use of the ancient unpolished stone weapons, appear to have inhabited the countries



FIG. 10.—Palæolithic Art.

now known as France and England, before the great Age of Ice. This makes their date one of incalculable antiquity ; they are removed from us by a "dark backward and abysm of time." The whole Age of Ice, the dateless period

of the polishers of stone weapons, the arrival of men using weapons of bronze, the time which sufficed to change the climate and fauna and flora of Western Europe, lie between us and the palæolithic man. Yet in him we must recognise a skill more akin to the spirit of modern art than is found in any other savage race. Palæolithic man, like other savages, decorated his weapons ; but, as I have already said, he did not usually decorate them in the common savage manner with ornamental patterns. He scratched on bits of bone spirited representations of all the animals whose remains are found mixed with his own. He designed the large-headed horse of



FIG. 11.—Red Indian Art : The Thunder-bird.

that period, and science inclines to believe that he drew the breed correctly. His sketches of the mammoth, the reindeer, the bear, and of many fishes, may be seen in the British Museum, or engraved in such works as Professor Boyd Dawkins's *Early Man in Britain*. The object from which our next illustration (Fig. 12) was engraved represents a deer, and was a knife-handle. Eyes at all trained in art can readily observe the wonderful spirit and freedom of these ancient sketches. They are the rapid characteristic work of true artists, who know instinctively what to select and what to sacrifice.

Some learned men, Mr. Boyd Dawkins among them, believe that the Eskimo,

that stunted hunting and fishing race of the Western Arctic Circle, are descendants of the palæolithic sketchers, and retain their artistic qualities. Other inquirers, with Mr. Geikie and Dr. Wilson, do not believe in this pedigree of the Eskimo. I speak not with authority, but the submission of ignorance, and as one who has no right to an opinion about these deep matters of geology and ethnology. But to me Mr. Geikie's arguments appear distinctly the more convincing, and I cannot think it demonstrated that

with the graver of a true artist (Fig. 14). The design is like a hasty memorandum of Leech's. Then compare the stiff formality of the modern Eskimo drawing (Fig. 13). It is rather like a record, a piece of picture-writing, than a free sketch, a rapid representation of what is most characteristic in nature. Clearly, if the Eskimo come from palæolithic man, they are a degenerate race as far as art is concerned. Yet, as may be seen in Dr. Rink's books, the Eskimo show considerable skill when they have

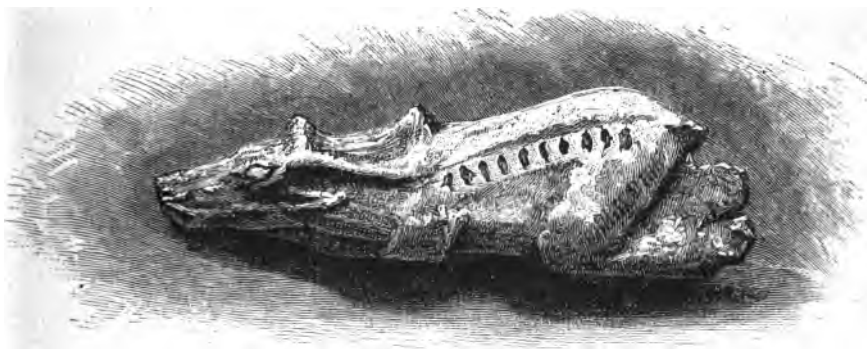


FIG. 12.—Palæolithic Art : A Knife-handle



FIG. 13.—Eskimo Drawing : A Reindeer Hunt.

the Eskimo are descended from our old palæolithic artists. Yet if Mr. Boyd Dawkins is right, if the Eskimo derive their lineage from the artists of the Dordogne, then, the Eskimo are sadly degenerated. In Mr. Dawkins's *Early Man* is an Eskimo drawing of a reindeer hunt, and a palæolithic sketch of a reindeer; these (by permission of the author and Messrs. Macmillan) we reproduce. Look at the vigour and life of the ancient drawing—the feathering hair on the deer's breast, his head, his horns, the very grasses at his feet, are touched

become acquainted with European methods and models, and they have, at any rate, a greater natural gift for design than the Red Indians, of whose sacred art the Thunder-bird brooding over page 72 is a fair example. The Red Men believe in big birds which produce thunder. Quahteht, the Adam of Vancouver's Island, married one, and this (Fig. 11) is she.

We have tried to show how savage decorative art supplied the first ideas of patterns which were developed in various ways by the decorative art of advancing

civilisation. The same progress might be detected in representative art. Books, like the guide-book to ancient Greece which Pausanias wrote before the glory had quite departed, prove that the Greek temples were museums in which the development of art might be clearly traced. Furthest back in the series of images of gods came things like that large stone which was given to Cronus when he wished to swallow his infant child Zeus, and which he afterwards vomited up with his living progeny. This fetich-stone was preserved at

gold-work. Greek temples have fallen, and the statues of the gods exist only in scattered fragments. But in the representative collection of casts belonging to the Cambridge Archæological Museum one may trace the career of Greek art backwards from Phidias to the rude idol.

"Savage realism" is the result of a desire to represent an object as it is known to be, and not as it appears. Thus Catlin, among the Red Indians, found that the people refused to be drawn in profile. They knew they had

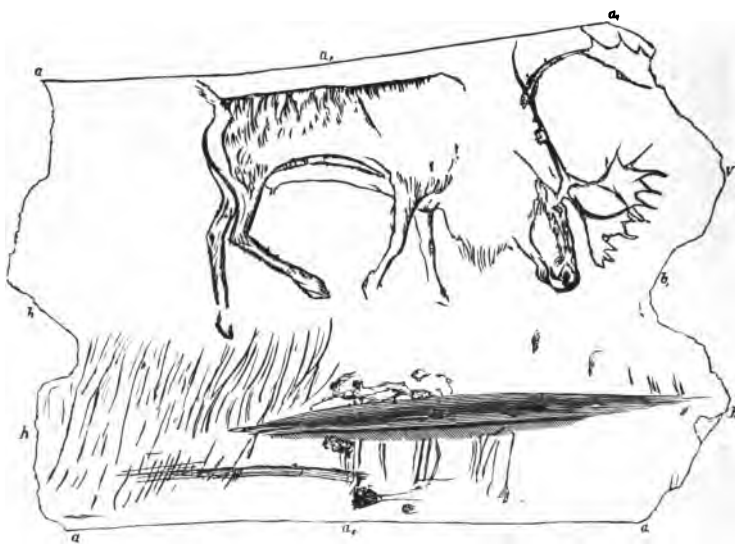


FIG. 14.—Paleolithic Sketch : A Reindeer.

Delphi. Next came wild bulks of beast-headed gods, like the horse-headed Demeter of Phigalia, and it seems possible enough that there was an Artemis with the head of a she-bear. Gradually the bestial characteristics dropped, and there appeared such rude anthropomorphic images of Apollo—more like South Sea idols than the archer prince—as are now preserved in Athens. Next we have the stage of semi-savage realism, which is represented by the metopes of Selinus in Sicily, now in the British Museum, and by not a few gems and pieces of

two eyes, and in profile they seemed only to have one. Look at the Selinus marbles, and you will observe that figures, of which the body is seen in profile, have the full face turned to the spectator. Again, the savage knows that an animal has two sides; both, he thinks, should be represented, but he cannot foreshorten, and he finds the profile view easiest to draw. To satisfy his need of realism he draws a beast's head full-face, and gives to the one head two bodies drawn in profile. Examples of this are frequent in Minoan gems and

gold work; and Mr. A. S. Murray suggests (as I understand him) that the attitude of the two famous lions which guarded vainly Agamemnon's gate at Mycenæ is derived from the archaic double-bodied and single-headed beast of savage realism. Very good examples of these oddities may be found in the *Journal of the Hellenic Society*, 1881, pl. xv. Here are double-bodied and single-headed birds, monsters, and sphinxes. We engrave (Fig. 15) three "Minoan" gems from the islands as examples of savagery in "Minoan" art. In the oblong gem the archers are rather below the Red Indian standard of design. The hunter figured in the first gem is almost up to the Bushman mark. In his dress ethnologists will recognise an arrangement now common among the natives of New Caledonia. In the third gem the woman between two swans may be Leda, or she may represent Leto in Delos. Observe the amazing rudeness

of the design, and note the modern waist and crinoline. That art, we know, could attain almost to the level of Greek



FIG. 15.—Archaic Greek Gems.

classical art, but the gem-cutters whose work is here represented were very poor artists.¹

¹ For "Minoan" masterpieces see Schuchardt, "Schliemann's Excavations," in Arthur Evans's *Prehistoric Tombs of Knossos*, Mr. Burrows's *Discoveries in Crete*, and, for a popular account with excellent illustrations, Signor Mosso's *Palaces of Crete*.

IX.

SAVAGE SPIRITUALISM

PHILOSOPHERS among the Dènè Hareskins, in the extreme north of America, recognise four classes of "Shadow" or magic. Their categories apply sufficiently closely to all savage sorcery (excluding sympathetic magic), as far as it has been observed. We have, among the Hareskins:—

1. Beneficent magic, used for the healing of the sick.

2. Malevolent magic—the black art of witchcraft.

3. Conjuring, or the working of merely sportive miracles.

4. Magic for ascertaining the truth about the future or the distant present—clairvoyance. This is called "The Young Man Bound and Bounding," from the widely-spread habit of tying up the limbs of the medium, and from his customary convulsions.

To all of these forms of magic, of spiritualism, the presence and aid or "spirits" is believed to be necessary,

with, perhaps, the exception of the sportive or conjuring class. A spirit helps to cure and helps to kill. The free spirit of the clairvoyant in bondage meets other spirits in its wanderings. Anthropologists, taking it for granted that "spirits" are a mere "animistic hypothesis"—their appearances being counterfeited by imposture—have paid little attention to the practical magic of savages, as far as it is not merely sympathetic and based on the doctrine that "like cures like."

Thus Mr. Sproat, in his excellent work, *Scenes and Studies of Savage Life*, frankly admits that in Vancouver Island the trickery and hocus-pocus of Aht sorcery were so repugnant to him that he could not occupy himself with the topic. Some other travellers have been more inquisitive; unlettered sojourners among the wilder peoples have shared their superstitions and consulted their oracles, while one or two of the old Jesuit missionaries were close and puzzled observers of their "mediumship."

Thus enough is known to show that savage spiritualism wonderfully resembles, even in minute details, that of modern mediums and *séances*, while both have the most striking parallels in the old classical thaumaturgy.

This uniformity, to a certain extent, is not surprising, for savage, classical, and modern spiritualism all repose on the primæval animistic hypothesis as their metaphysical foundation. The origin of this hypothesis—namely, that disembodied intelligences exist and are active—is explained by anthropologists as the result of early reasonings on life, death, sleep, dreams, trances, shadows, the phenomena of epilepsy, and the illusions of starvation. This scientific theory is, in itself, unimpeachable; normal phenomena, psychological and physical, might suggest most of the animistic beliefs.¹

At the same time, "veridical hallucinations," if there are any, and clairvoy-

ance, if there is such a thing, would do much to originate and confirm the animistic opinions. Meanwhile, the extraordinary similarity of savage and classical spiritualistic rites, with the corresponding similarity of alleged modern phenomena, raises problems which it is more easy to state than to solve. For example, such occurrences as "rappings," as the movement of untouched objects, as the lights of the *séance* room, are all easily feigned. But that ignorant modern knaves should feign precisely the same raps, lights, and movements as the most remote and unsophisticated barbarians, and as the educated Platonists of the fourth century after Christ, and that many of the other phenomena should be identical in each case, is certainly noteworthy. This kind of folklore is the most persistent, the most apt to revive, and the most uniform. We have to decide between the theories of independent invention; of transmission, borrowing, and secular tradition; and of a substratum of actual fact.

Thus, either the rite of binding the sorcerer was invented, for no obvious reason, in a given place, and thence reached the Australian blacks, the Eskimo, the Dènè Hareskins, the Davenport Brothers, and the Neo-Platonists, or it was independently evolved in each of several remote regions; or it was found to have some actual effect—what we cannot guess—on persons entranced. What the effect was supposed to be is not beyond the range of conjecture. Many savage and barbaric peoples bind up the limbs of the body about to be interred. Probably the purpose is to prevent the dead from "walking." To bind up a living man is to make him like the dead, and a sharer of their mystic lore. Thus, in Scotland, to make a man second-sighted, he was bound up with a hair-rope that had bound a corpse to the bier. After that he had second sight.² We are

¹ See Mr. Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, chap. xi., for the best statement of the theory.

² Kirk (*ob.* 1692), *Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Fauns, and Fairies*.

hampered by not knowing, in our comparatively rational state of development, what strange things it is natural for a savage to invent. That spirits should knock and rap seems to us about as improbable an idea as could well occur to the fancy. Were we inventing a form for a spirit's manifestations to take, we never should invent *that*. But what a savage might think an appropriate invention we do not know. Meanwhile, we have the mediæval and later tales of rapping, some of which, to be frank, have never been satisfactorily accounted for on any theory. But, on the other hand, each of us might readily invent another common "manifestation"—the *wind* which is said to accompany the spirit.

The very word *spiritus* suggests air in motion, and the very idea of abnormal power suggests the trembling and shaking of the place wherein it is present. Yet, on the other side, the "cold non-natural wind" of *stances*, of Swedenborg, and of a hundred stories, old or new, is undeniably felt by some sceptical observers, even on occasions where no professional charlatan is engaged. I may cite my brother, the late T. W. Lang, of Balliol College, who played in the University and Gloucestershire Elevens in 1874 and 1875. He and other undergraduates, mostly "Blues," and sceptical enough, held *stances* in the rooms of the Oxford wicket-keeper. I need not describe the amazing things that occurred. "The noise was as great when all the men had gone out of college," said their host to me, "as when we were all in the room." The point is that, as my brother told me, "just before any very odd thing happened, I felt a very cold wind blowing over my hands." As to the trembling and shaking of the house or hut, where the spirit is alleged to be, we shall examine some curious evidence, ancient and modern, savage and civilised. So of the other phenomena. Some seem to be of easy natural invention, others not so; and, in the latter case,

independent evolution of an idea not obvious is a difficult hypothesis, while transmission from the Pole to Australia, though conceivable, is apt to give rise to doubt.

Meanwhile, one phenomenon, which is usually said to accompany others much more startling, may now be held to have won acceptance from science. This is what the Dènè Hareskins call *the Sleep of the Shadow*—that is, *the Magical Sleep*, the hypnotic trance. Savages are well acquainted with this abnormal condition, and with means of producing it; and it is at the bottom of all their more mysterious, non-sympathetic magic. Before Mesmer, and even till within the last thirty years, this phenomenon, too, would have been scouted; now it is a commonplace of physiology. For such physical symptoms as introverted eyes in seers we need look no further than Martin's account of the second-sighted men, in his book on the Hebrides. The phenomenon of anæsthesia, insensibility to pain, in trance, is not unfamiliar to science; but that red-hot coals should not burn a seer or medium is, perhaps, less easily accepted; while science, naturally, does not recognise the clairvoyance, and still less the "spiritual" attendants, of the seer in the Sleep of the Shadow. Nevertheless, classical, modern, and savage spiritualists are agreed in reporting these last and most startling phenomena of the magic slumber in certain cases.

Beginning with what may be admitted as possible, we find that the Dènè Hareskins practise a form of healing under hypnotic or mesmeric treatment.¹ The physician (who is to be pitied) begins by a three days' fast. Then a "magic lodge," afterwards to be described, is built for him in the forest. Here he falls into the Sleep of the Shadow; the patient is then brought before him. In the lodge the patient confesses his sins to his doctor, and

¹ Petitot, *Traditions Indiennes du Canada Nord-Ouest*, p. 434. Digitized by Google

when that ghostly friend has heard all he sings and plays the tambour, invoking the spirit to descend on the sick man. The singing of barbarous songs was part of classical spiritualism; the Norse witch, in *The Saga of Eric the Red*, insisted on the song of Warlocks being chanted, which secured the attendance of "many powerful spirits"; and modern spiritualists enliven their dark and dismal programme by songs. Presently the Hareskin physician blows on the patient, and bids the malady quit him. He also makes "passes" over the invalid till he produces trance; the spirit is supposed to assist. Then the spirit extracts the *sin* which caused the suffering, and the illness is cured, after the patient has been awakened by a loud cry. In all this affair of confession one is inclined to surmise a mixture of Catholic practice, imitated from the missionaries. It is also not, perhaps, impossible that hypnotic treatment may occasionally have been of some real service.

Turning to British Guiana, where, as elsewhere, hysterical and epileptic people make the best mediums, or "Peay-men," we are fortunate in finding an educated observer who submitted to be *peayed*. Mr. Im Thurn, in the interests of science, endured a savage form of cure for headache. The remedy was much worse than the disease. In a hammock in the dark, attended by a peay-man armed with several bunches of green boughs, Mr. Im Thurn lay, under a vow not to touch whatever might touch him. The peay-man kept howling questions to the *kenaimas*, or spirits, who answered. "It was a clever piece of ventriloquism and acting."

"Every now and then, through the mad din, there was a sound, at first low and indistinct, and then gathering in volume, as if some big, winged thing came from far towards the house, passed through the roof, and then settled heavily on the floor; and again, after an interval, as if the same winged thing rose and passed away as it had come," while the air was sensibly stirred. A noise of

lapping up some tobacco-water set out for the *kenaimas* was also audible. The rustling of wings, and the thud, "were imitated, as I afterwards found, by skilfully shaking the leafy boughs, and then dashing them suddenly against the ground." Mr. Im Thurn bit one of the boughs which came close to his face, and caught leaves in his teeth. As a rule, he lay in a condition scarcely conscious: "It seemed to me that my spirit was as nearly separated from my body as is possible in any circumstances short of death. Thus it appears that the efforts of the peay-man were directed partly to the separation of his own spirit from his body, and partly to the separation of the spirit from the body of his patient, and that in this way spirit holds communion with spirit." But Mr. Im Thurn's headache was not alleviated! The whirring noise occurs in the case of the Cock Lane Ghost (1762), in Iamblichus, in some "haunted houses," and is reported by a modern lady spiritualist in a book which provokes sceptical comments. Now, had the peay tradition reached Cock Lane, or was the peay-man counterfeiting, very cleverly, some real phenomenon?²

We may next examine cases in which, the savage medium being entranced, spirits come to him and answer questions. Australia is so remote, and it is so unlikely that European or American spiritualists suggested their ideas to the older blacks (for mediumship seems to be nearly extinct since the settling of the country), that any transmission of such notions to the Black Fellows must be very ancient. Our authorities are Mr. Brough Smyth, in *Aborigines of Victoria* (i. 472), and Messrs. Fison and Howitt, in *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*, who tell just the same tale. The spirits in Victoria are called *Mrarts*, and are understood to be the souls of Black Fellows dead

² Very possibly the whirring roar of the *turndan*, or *ρῶρος*, in Greek, Zufi, Yoruba, Australian, Maori, and South African mysteries is connected with this belief in a whirring sound caused by spirits. See "The Bull-Roarer."

and gone, not demons unattached. The mediums, now very scarce, are *Birraarks*. They were consulted as to things present and future. The Birraark leaves the camp, the fire is kept low, and someone "cooees" at intervals. "Then a noise is heard. The narrator here struck a book against the table several times to describe it." This, of course, is "spirit-rapping." The knocks have a home among the least cultivated savages, as well as in mediæval and modern Europe. Then whistles are heard, a phenomenon lavishly illustrated in certain *séances* held at Rio de Janeiro¹ where children were mediums. The spiritual whistle is familiar to Glanvil and to Homer. Mr. Wesley, at Epworth (1716), noted it among all the other phenomena. The Mrarts are next heard "jumping down," like the *kenaimas*. Questions are put to them, and they answer. They decline, very naturally, to approach a bright fire. The medium (Birraark) is found entranced, either on the ground where the Mrarts have been talking or at the top of a tree, very difficult to climb, "and up which there are no marks of anyone having climbed." The blacks, of course, are peculiarly skilled in detecting such marks. In maleficent magic, as among the Dènè Hareskins, the Australian sorcerer has "his head, body, and limbs wound round with stringy bark cords."² The enchantment is believed to drag the victim, in a trance, towards the sorcerer. This binding is customary among the Eskimo, and, as Mr. Myers has noted, was used in the rites described by the Oracles in "trance utterances," which Porphyry collected in the fourth century. Whether the binding was thought to restrain the convulsions of the mediums, or whether it was originally a "test condition" to prevent the medium from cheating (as in modern experiments), we cannot discover. It does not appear to be in use among the Maoris, whose speciality is "trance utterance."

A very picturesque description of a Maori *séance* is given in *Old New Zealand*.³ The story loses greatly by being condensed. A popular and accomplished young chief had died in battle, and his friends asked the *Tohunga*, or medium, to call him back. The chief was able to read and write; he had kept a journal of remarkable events, and that journal, though "unceasingly searched for," had disappeared. This was exactly a case for a test, and that which was given would have been good enough for spiritualists, though not for more reasonable human beings. In the village hall, in flickering firelight, the friends, with the English observer, the "Pakeha Maori," were collected. The medium, by way of a "cabinet," selected the darkest corner. The fire burned down to a red glow. Suddenly the spirit spoke, "Salutation to my tribe," and the chief's sister, a beautiful girl, rushed, with open arms, into the darkness; she was seized and held by her friends. The gloom, the tears, the sorrow, nearly overcame the incredulity of the Englishman, as the Voice came, "a strange melancholy sound, like the sound of a wind blowing into a hollow vessel." "It is well with me," it said, "my place is a good place." They asked of their dead friends; the hollow answers replied, and the Englishman "felt a strange swelling of the chest." The Voice spoke again: "Give my large pig to the priest," and the sceptic was disenchanted. He now thought of the test. "'We cannot find your book,' I said; 'where have you concealed it?' The answer immediately came: 'Between the *Tahuu* of my house and the thatch, straight over you as you go into the door.'" Here the brother rushed out. "In five minutes he came back, *with the book in his hand*." After one or two more remarks the Voice came, "'Farewell!' *from deep beneath the ground*. 'Farewell!' again *from high in air*. 'Farewell!' once more came moaning

¹ *Proc. S. P. R.*, xix. 180.

² Brough Smyth, i. 475.

³ Auckland, 1863, ch. x.

through the distant darkness of the night. The deception was perfect. 'A ventriloquist,' said I, 'or—or, *perhaps* the devil.' The *séance* had an ill end: the chief's sister shot herself.

This was decidedly a well-got-up affair for a colonial place. The Maori oracles are precisely like those of Delphi. In one case a chief was absent, was inquired for, and the Voice came, "He will return, yet not return." Six months later the chief's friends went to implore him to come home. They brought him back a corpse; they had found him dying, and carried away the body. In another case, when the Maori oracle was consulted as to the issue of a proposed war, it said: "A desolate country, a desolate country, a desolate country!" The chiefs, of course, thought the *other* country was meant, but they were deceived, as Croesus was by Delphi, when he was told that he "would ruin a great empire." In yet another case the Maoris were anxious for the spirits to bring back a European ship, on which a girl had fled with the captain. The Pakeha Maori was present at this *séance*, and heard the "hollow, mysterious, whistling Voice, 'The ship's nose I will batter out on the great sea.'" Even the priest was puzzled; this, he said, was clearly a deceitful spirit, or *atua*, like those of which Porphyry complains—like most of them, in fact. But, ten days later, the ship came back to port; she had met a gale, and sprung a leak in the bow, called, in Maori, "the nose" (*ihu*). It is hardly surprising that some Europeans used to consult the oracle.

Possibly some spiritualists may take comfort in these anecdotes, and allege that the Maori mediums were "very powerful." This is said to have been the view taken by some American believers, in a very curious case, reported by Kohl; but the tale, as he tells it, cannot possibly be accurate. However, it illustrates and strangely coincides with some stories related by the Jesuit Père Lejeune, in the Canadian Mission, about 1637. The instances bear both

on clairvoyance and on the force which is said to shake houses as well as to lift tables, in the legends of the modern thaumaturgists. We shall take Kohl's tale before those of the old Jesuit. Kohl first describes the "Medicine Lodge," already alluded to in the account of Dènè Hareskin magic.

The "lodge" answers to what spiritualists call "the cabinet," usually a place curtained off in modern practice. Behind this the medium now gets up his "materialisations," and other cheap mysteries. The classical performers of the fourth century also knew the advantage of a close place,¹ "where the power would not be scattered." This idea is very natural, granting the "power." The modern Ojibway "close place," or lodge, like those seen by old Jesuit fathers, "is composed of stout posts, connected with basket-work, and covered with birch bark. It is tall and narrow, and resembles a chimney. It is very firmly built, and two men, even if exerting their utmost strength, would be unable to move, shake, or bend it."² On this topic Kohl received information from a gentleman who "knew the Indians well, and was even related to them through his wife." He, and many other white people thirty years before, saw a *Jossakeed*, or medium, crawl into such a lodge as Kohl describes, beating his tambour. "The entire case began gradually trembling, shaking, and oscillating slowly amidst great noise.....It bent back and forwards, up and down, like the mast of a vessel in a storm. I could not understand how those movements could be produced by a man inside, as we could not have caused them from the exterior." Two voices, "both entirely different," were then heard within. "Some spiritualists" (here is the weakest part of the story) "who were present explained it through modern spiritualism." Now this was

¹ ἐν τινι στερέῳ χωρίῳ, ὥστε μὴ ἐπιπολὺ διαχεῖσθαι.—Iamblichus.

² Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami*, p. 278.

not before 1859, when Kohl's book appeared in English, and modern spiritualism, as a sect of philosophy, was not born till 1848, so that thirty years before 1859, in 1829, there were no modern spiritualists. This, then, is absurd. However, the tale goes on, and Kohl's informant says that he knew the *Jossakeed*, or medium, who had become a Christian. On his deathbed the white man asked him how it was done: "now is the time to confess all truthfully." The converted one admitted the premises—he was dying, a Christian man—but, "Believe me, I did not deceive you at that time. I did not move the lodge. It was shaken by the power of the spirits. I could see a great distance round me, and believed I could recognise the most distant objects." This "with an expression of simple truth." It is interesting, but the interval of thirty years is a naked impossibility. In 1829 there were queer doings in America. Joe Smith's Mormons "spoke with tongues," like Irving's congregation at the same time; but there were no modern spiritualists. Kohl's informant should have said "ten years ago" if he wanted his anecdote to be credited, and it is curious that Kohl did not notice this circumstance.

We now come to the certainly honest evidence of the Père Lejeune, the Jesuit missionary. In the *Relations de la Nouvelle France* (1634) Lejeune discusses the sorcerers, who, as rival priests, gave him great trouble. He describes the Medicine Lodge just as Kohl does. The fire is put out, of course, the sorcerer enters, the lodge shakes, voices are heard in Montagnais and Algonkin, and the Father thought it all a clumsy imposture. The sorcerer, in a very sportsmanlike way, asked him to go in himself and try what he could make of it. "You'll find that your body remains below and your soul mounts aloft." The cautious Father, reflecting that there were no white witnesses, declined to make the experiment. This lodge was larger than those which Kohl saw,

and would have held half-a-dozen men. This was in 1634; by 1637 Père Lejeune began to doubt whether his theory that the lodge was shaken by the juggler would hold water. Two Indians—one of them a sorcerer, Pigarouich, "me descouvant avec grande sincerité toutes ses malices"—"making a clean breast of his tricks"—vowed that they did not shake the lodge—that a great wind entered *fort promptement et rudement*, and they added that the "tabernacle" (as Lejeune very injudiciously calls the Medicine Lodge) "is sometimes so strong that a single man can hardly stir it." The sorcerer was a small weak man. Lejeune himself noted the strength of the structure, and saw it move with a violence which he did not think a man could have communicated to it, especially not for such a length of time. He was assured by many (Indian) witnesses that the tabernacle was sometimes laid level with the ground, and again that the sorcerer's arm and legs might be seen projecting outside, while the lodge staggered about—nay, more, the lodge would rock and sway after the juggler had left it. As usual, there was a savage, Auis-kuouaskousit, who had seen a juggler rise in air out of the structure, while others, looking in, saw that he was absent. St. Theresa had done equal marvels, but this does not occur to the good Father.

The savage with the long name was a Christian catechumen, and yet he stood to it that he had seen a sorcerer disappear before his very eyes, like the second-sighted Highlander in Kirk's *Secret Commonwealth* (1691). "His neighbours often perceived this man to disappear at a certain place, and about one hour after to become visible." It would be more satisfactory if the Father had seen these things himself, like Mrs. Newton Crosland, who informs the world that, when with Robert Chambers and other persons of sanity, she felt a whole house violently shaken, trembling, and thrilling in the presence of a medium—not a professional, but a young lady

amateur. Here, of course, we greatly desire the evidence of Robert Chambers. Spirits came to Swedenborg with a wind, but it was only strong enough to flutter papers, "the cause of which," as he remarks with *naïveté*, "I do not yet understand." If Swedenborg had gone into a Medicine Lodge, no doubt, in that "close place," the phenomena would have been very much more remarkable. In 1853 Père Arnaud visited the Nasquapees, and describes a *séance*. "The conjurers shut themselves up in a little lodge, and remain for a few minutes in a pensive attitude, cross-legged. Soon the lodge begins to move like a table turning, and replies by bounds and jumps to the questions which are put to the conjurer."¹ The experiment might be tried with a modern medium.

Father Lejeune, in 1637, gives a case which reminds us of Home. According to Home, and to Mrs. S. C. Hall, and other witnesses, when "in power" he could not only handle live coals without being burned, but he actually placed a large glowing coal, about the size of a cricket-ball, on the pate of Mr. S. C. Hall, where it shone redly through Mr. Hall's white locks, but did him no manner of harm. Now Father Pijart was present, *tesmoin oculaire*, when a Huron medicine-man heated a stone red-hot, put it in his mouth, and ran round the cabin with it, without receiving any harm. Father Brébeuf, afterwards a most heroic martyr, sent the stone to Father Lejeune; it bore the marks of the medicine-man's teeth, though Father Pijart, examining the man, found that lips and tongue had no trace of burn or blister. He reasonably concluded that these things could not be done "*sans l'opération de quelque Démon*." That an excited patient should not feel fire is, perhaps, admissible; but that it should not scorch either Mr. Hall, or Home, or the Huron, is a large demand on our credulity. Still, the evidence in this case (that of Mr. Crookes and Lord Crawford) is much better than usual.

It would be strange if practices analogous to modern "table-turning" did not exist among savage and barbaric races. Thus Mr. Tylor, in *Primitive Culture* (ii. 156), quotes a Kutuchtu Lama, who mounted a bench, and rode it, as it were, to a tent where stolen goods were concealed. The bench was believed, by the credulous Mongols, to carry the Lama! Among the Manyanja of Africa thefts are detected by young men holding sticks in their hands. After a sufficient amount of incantation, dancing, and convulsions, the sticks become possessed, the men "can hardly hold them," and are dragged after them in the required directions.² These examples are analogous to the use of the Divining Rod, which is probably moved unconsciously by honest "dowsers"; "sometimes they believe that they can hardly hold it." These are cases of movement of objects in contact with human muscles, and are, therefore, not at all mysterious in origin. A regular case of movement *without* contact was reported from Thibet, by M. Tschérépanoff, in 1855. The modern epidemic of table-turning had set in when M. Tschérépanoff wrote thus to the *Abeille Russe*:³ "The Lama can find stolen objects by following a table which flies before him." But the Lama, after being asked to trace an object, requires an interval of some days before he sets about finding it. When he is ready, he sits on the ground reading a Thibetan book, in front of a small square table, on which he rests his hands. At the end of half-an-hour he rises and lifts his hands from the surface of the table; presently the table also rises from the ground and follows the direction of his hand. The Lama elevates his hand above his head, the table reaches the level of his eyes; the Lama walks, the table rushes before him in the air, so rapidly that he can scarcely keep up with

¹ Rowley, *Universities' Mission to Central Africa*, p. 217: cited by Mr. Tylor.

² Quoted in *La Table Parlante*, a French serial, No. 1, p. 6.

³ Hind's *Explorations in Labrador*, ii. 102.

its flight. The table then spins round, and falls on the earth; the direction in which it falls indicates that in which the stolen object is to be sought. M. Tschérépanoff says that he saw the table fly about forty feet, and fall. The stolen object was not immediately discovered; but a Russian peasant, seeing the line which the table took, committed suicide, and the object was found in his hut. The date was 1831. M. Tschérépanoff could not believe his eyes, and searched in vain for an iron wire, or other mechanism, but could find nothing of the sort. This anecdote, if it does not prove a miracle, illustrates a custom.*

As to clairvoyance among savages, the subject is comparatively familiar. Montezuma's priests predicted the arrival of the Spaniards long before the event. On this point, in itself well vouched for, Acosta tells a story which illustrates the identity of the "astral body," or double, with the ordinary body. In the witch stories of Increase Mather and others, where the possessed sees the phantasm of the witch, and strikes it, the actual witch proves to be injured. Story leads to story, and Mr. Thomas Hardy somewhere tells one to this effect. A farmer's wife, a woman of some education, fell asleep in the afternoon, and dreamed that a neighbour of hers, a woman, was sitting on her chest. She caught at the figure's arm in her dream, and woke. Later in the day she met her neighbour, who complained of a pain in the arm, just where the farmer's wife seized it in her dream. The place mortified, and the poor lady died. To return to Montezuma. An honest labourer was brought before him, who made this very tough statement. He had been carried by an eagle into a cave, where he saw a man in splendid dress sleeping heavily. Beside him stood a burning stick of incense such as the Aztecs used. A

voice announced that this sleeper was Montezuma, prophesied his doom, and bade the labourer burn the slumberer's face with the flaming incense stick. The labourer reluctantly applied the flame to the royal nose, "but he moved not, nor showed any feeling." On this anecdote being related to Montezuma, he looked on his own face in a mirror, and "found that he was burned, the which he had not felt till then."†

On the Coppermine River the medicine-man, according to Hearne, prophesies of travellers, like the Highland second-sighted man, ere they appear. The Finns and Lapps boast of similar powers. Scheffer is copious on the clairvoyant feats of Lapps in trance. The Eskimo Angakut, when bound with their heads between their legs, cause luminous apparitions, just as was done by Mr. Stainton Moses and by the mediums known to Porphyry and Iamblichus; the Angakut also send their souls on voyages, and behold distant lands. One of the oddest Angekok stories in Rink's *Tales and Traditions of the Eskimo* (p. 324) tells how some children played at magic, making "a dark cabinet," by hanging jackets over the door to exclude the light. "The slabs of the floor were lifted, and rushed after them"—a case of "movement of objects without physical contact." This phenomenon in future attended the young medium's possessions, even when he was away from home. This particular kind of manifestation, so very common in trials for witchcraft, and in modern spiritualistic literature, does not appear to prevail much among savages. Persons otherwise credible and sane tell the authorities of the Psychical Society that, with only three amateurs present, things are thrown about, and objects are brought from places many miles distant and tossed on the table. These are technically termed *apports*. The writer knows

* Colonel A. B. Ellis, in his work on the Yorubas (1894), reports singular motions of a large wooden cylinder. It is used in ordeals.

† *The Natural and Morall History of the East and West Indies*, p. 566, London, 1604.

a case in which this was attested by a witness of the most unimpeachable character. But savages hardly go so far. Bishop Callaway has an instance in which "spirits" tossed objects into the midst of a Zulu circle; but such things are not usual. Savages also set out food for the dead; but they scarcely attain to the credulity, or are granted the experience, of a writer in the *Medium*.¹ This astonishing person knew a familiar spirit. At dinner, one day, an empty chair began to move, "and, in answer to the question whether it would have some dinner, said 'Yes.'" It chose *croquets de pomme de terre*, which were placed on the chair in a spoon, lest the spirit, whose manners were rustic, should break a plate. "In a few seconds I was told that it was eaten; and, looking, found the half of it gone, with the marks showing the teeth." Perhaps few savages would have told such a tale to a journal which ought to have a large circulation—among believers.

The examples of savage spiritualism which have been adduced might probably receive many additions—those are but gleanings from a large field carelessly harvested. The phenomena have been but casually studied; the civilised mind is apt to see in *savage séances* nothing but noisy buffoonery. We have shown that there is a more serious belief involved, and we have adduced cases in which white men were not unconscious of the barbarian spell. It also appears that the now recognised phenomena of hypnotism are the basis of the more serious savage magic. The production of hypnotic trances, perhaps of hypnotic hallucinations, is a piece of knowledge which savages possessed (as they were acquainted with quinine), while European physicians and philosophers ignored or laughed at it. Tobacco and quinine were more acceptable gifts from the barbarian. His magic has now and then been examined by a competent anthropo-

logist, like Mr. Im Thurn, and Castren closely observed the proceedings of the bound and bounding Shamans among the Samoyeds. But we need the evidence both of anthropologists and of adepts in conjuring. They might detect some of the tricks, though Mr. Kellar, a professional conjurer and exposé of spiritualistic imposture, has been fairly baffled (he says) by Zulus and Hindus, while educated Americans are puzzled by the Pawnees. Mr. Kellar's plan of displaying a few of his own tricks was excellent; the dusky professionals were stimulated to show theirs, which, as described, were miracles. The Pakeha Maori already quoted saw a Maori *Tohunga* perform "a very good miracle as times go," but he does not give any particulars. The late Mr. Davey, who started as a spiritualist catechumen, managed, by conjuring, to produce answers to questions on a locked slate, which is as near a miracle as anything. But Mr. Davey is dead, though we know his secret, while it is improbable that Mr. Maskelyne will enrich his *répertoire* by travelling among Zulus, Hindus, and Pawnees. As savages cease to be savages, our opportunities of learning their mystic lore must decrease.

To one point in this research the notice of students in folklore may be specially directed. In the attempt to account for the diffusion of popular tales such as *Cinderella*, we are told to observe that the countries most closely adjacent to each other have the most closely similar variants of the story. This is true, as a rule; but it is also true that, while Scandinavian regions have a form of *Cinderella* with certain peculiarities not shared by Southern Europe, those crop up sporadically, far away, among Kaffirs and the Indian "aboriginal" tribe of Santhals. The same phenomenon of diffusion occurs when we find *savage mediums* tied up in their trances, all over the North, among Canadian Hareskins, among Samoyed and Eskimo, while the practice ceases at a given point in Labrador, and gives place to Medicine

¹ February 9th, 1872. Quoted by Mr. Tylor, in *Primitive Culture*, ii., 39, 1873.

Lodges. The binding then reappears, if not in Australia, certainly in the ancient Greek ceremonial. The writer is not acquainted with "the bound and bounding young man" in the intervening

regions, and it would be very interesting to find connecting cases, stepping-stones, as it were, by which the rite passed from the Levant to the frozen North.

X.

ANCIENT SPIRITUALISM

IN the *Revue des Deux Mondes* for 1856, tome i., M. Littré published an article on table-turning and "rapping spirits." M. Littré was a savant whom nobody accused of superstition, and France possessed no clearer intellect. Yet his attitude towards the popular marvels of the day—an attitude at once singular and natural—shows how easily the greatest minds can pay themselves with words. A curious reader, in that period of excitement about "spiritualism," would turn to the *Revue*, attracted by M. Littré's name. He would ask: "Does M. Littré accept the alleged facts: if so, how does he explain them?" And he would find that this guide of human thought did not, at least, *reject* the facts; that he did not (as he well might have done) offer imposture as the general explanation; that he regarded the topic as very obscure and eminently worthy of study, and that he pooh-poohed the whole affair!

This is not very consistent or helpful counsel. Like the rest of us, who are so far beneath M. Littré in grasp and in weight of authority, he was subject to the *idola fori*, the illusions of the marketplace. It would never do for a great scientific sceptic to say: "Here are strange and important facts of human nature; let us examine them as we do all other natural phenomena"—it would

never do for such a man to say that without qualification. So he concluded his essay in the pooh-pooh tone of voice. He first gives a sketch of abnormalities in mortal experience, as in the case of mental epidemics, of witchcraft, of the so-called prophets in the Cevennes, of the Jansenist marvels. He mentions a nunnery where, "in the sixteenth century," there occurred, among other phenomena, movements of inanimate objects, pottery specially distinguishing itself, as in the famous "Stockwell mystery." Unluckily, he supplies no references for these adventures.¹ The *Revue*, being written for men and women of the world, may discuss such topics, but need not offer exact citations. M. Littré, on the strength of his historical sketch, decides, most correctly, that there is *rien de nouveau*, nothing new, in the spirit-rapping epidemic. "These maladies never desert our race." But this fact hardly explains *why* "vessels were dragged from the hands" of his nuns in the sixteenth century.

In search of a cause, he turns to hallucinations. In certain or uncertain physical conditions, the mind can project and objectify its own creations. Thus Gleditch saw the dead Maupertuis, with perfect distinctness, in the *salle* of the Academy at Berlin. Had he not known

¹ *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1856, tome i., p. 853.

that Maupertuis was dead, he could have sworn to his presence (p. 866). Yes; but how does that explain volatile pots and pans? Well, there are *collective* hallucinations, as when the persecuted in the Cevennes, like the Covenanters, heard non-existent psalmody. And all witches told much the same tale; apparently because they were collectively hallucinated. Then, were the spectators of the agile crockery collectively hallucinated? M. Littré does not say so explicitly, though this is a conceivable theory. He alleges, after all his scientific statements about sensory troubles, that "the whole chapter, a chapter most deserving of study, which contains the series of demoniac affections (*affections démoniaques*), has hardly been sketched out."

Among accounts of "demoniac affections," descriptions of objects moved without contact are of frequent occurrence. As M. Littré says, it is always the same old story. But why is it always the same old story? There were two theories before the world in 1856. First there was the "animistic hypothesis"—"spirits" move the objects, spirits raise the medium in the air, spirits are the performers of the airy music. Then there was the hypothesis of a force or fluid, or faculty, inherent in mankind, and notable in some rare examples of humanity. This force, fluid, agency, or what you will, counteracts the laws of gravitation, and compels tables, or pots, to move untouched.

To the spiritualists M. Littré says, "Bah!" To the partisans of a force or fluid he says, "Pooh!" "If your spirits are spirits, why do they let the world wag on in its old way, why do they confine themselves to trivial effects?"

The spiritualist would probably answer that he did not understand the nature and limits of spiritual powers.

To the friends of a force or faculty in our nature M. Littré remarks, in effect, "Why don't you *use* your force? Why don't you supply a new motor for locomotives? *Pooh!*" The answer would

be that it was not the volume and market value of the force, but the *existence* of the force, which interested the inquirer. When amber, being rubbed, attracted straws, the force was as much a force, as worthy of scientific study, as when electricity is employed to bring bad news more rapidly from the ends of the earth.

These answers are obvious: M. Littré's satire was not the weapon of science, but the familiar test of the *bourgeois* and the Philistine. Still, he admitted—nay, asserted strongly—that the whole series of "demoniac affections" was "most worthy of investigation," and was "hardly sketched out." In a similar manner, Brierre de Boismont, in his work on hallucinations, explains a number of "clairvoyant" dreams by ordinary causes. But, coming to a vision which he knew at first hand, he breaks down: "We must confess that these explanations do not satisfy us, and that these events seem rather to belong to some of the deepest mysteries of our being."¹ There is a point at which the explanations of common sense arouse scepticism.

Much has been done, since 1856, towards producing a finished picture, in place of an *ébauche*. The accepted belief in the phenomena of hypnotism, and of unconscious mental and bodily actions—"automatisms"—has expelled the old belief in spirits from many a dusty nook. But we still ask: "*Do* objects move untouched? *why* do they move, or, if they move not at all (as is most probable), *why* is it always the same story, from the Arctic Circle to the tales of witches, and of mediums?"

There is little said about this particular phenomenon (though something is said), but there is much about other marvels, equally widely rumoured of, in the brief and dim Greek records of thaumaturgy. To examine these historically is to put a touch or two on the picture of "demoniac affections" which M. Littré

¹ *Hallucinations*, English translation, p. 182; London, 1859.

desired to see executed. The Greek mystics, at least, believed that the airy music, the movements of untouched objects, the triumph over gravitation and other natural laws, for which they vouch, were caused by "demons," were "demoniac affections." To compare the statements of Eusebius and Iamblichus with those of modern men of science and other modern witnesses can, therefore, only be called superfluous and superstitious by those who think M. Littré superstitious, and his desired investigation "superfluous."

When the epidemic of "spiritualism" broke out in the United States (1848-1852), students of classical literature perceived that spiritualism was no new thing, but a recrudescence of practices familiar to the ancient world. Even readers who had confined their attention to the central masterpieces of Greek literature recognised some of the revived "phenomena." The "Trance Medium," the "Inspirational Speaker," was a reproduction of the maiden with a spirit of divination, of the Delphic Pythia. In the old belief, the god dominated her, and spoke from her lips, just as the "control," or directing spirit, dominates the medium. But there were still more striking resemblances between ancient and modern thaumaturgy, which were only to be recognised by readers of the late Neo-Platonists, such as Porphyry, and of the Christian Fathers, such as Eusebius, who argued against the apologists of heathenism. The central classical writers, from Homer to Tacitus, are not superstitious; they accept the orthodox State magic of omens, of augurs, of prodigies, of oracles, but anything like private necromancy is alien and distasteful to them. We need not doubt that sorcery and the consultation of the dead were being practised all through the classical period; indeed, we know that it was so. Plato legislates against sorcery in a practical manner; whether it does harm or not, men are persuaded that it does harm; it is vain to argue with them, therefore the wizard and witch

are to be punished for their bad intentions.¹

There were regular and, so to speak, orthodox oracles of the dead. They might be consulted by such as chose to sleep on tombs, or to visit the cavern of Trophonius, or other chasms which were thought to communicate with the underworld. But the idea of bringing a shade, or a hero, a demon, or a god into a private room, as in modern spiritualism, meets us late, in such works as the *Letter of Porphyry* and the *Reply of Iamblichus*, written in the fourth century of our era. If we may judge by the usual fortune of folklore, these private spiritualistic rites, without temple or State-supported priestly order, were no new things in the early centuries of Christianity; but they had not till then occupied the attention of philosophers and men of letters. The dawn of our faith was the late twilight of the ancient creeds, the classic gods were departing, belief was waning, ghosts were walking, even philosophers were seeking for a sign. The mysteries of the East had invaded Hellas.

The Egyptian theory and practice were of special importance. By certain sacramental formulæ, often found written on papyrus, the gods could be constrained, and made, like mediæval devils, the slaves of the magician. Examples will occur later. This idea was alien to the Greek mind, at least to the philosophic Greek mind. The Egyptians, like Michael Scott, had books of dread, and an old Egyptian romance turns on the evils which arose, as to William of Deloraine, from the possession of such a volume.² Half-understood strings of Hebrew, Syriac, and other "barbarous" words and incantations occur in Greek spells of the early Christian age. Again, old Hellenic magic rose from the lower strata of folklore into that of speculation. The people, the folk, is the unconscious self, as it were, of the educated and literary classes, who, in a twilight of

¹ *Laws*, xi.

² *Records of the Past*, iv. 134-36.

creeds, are wont to listen to its promptings, and return to the old ancestral superstitions long forgotten.

The epoch of the rise of modern spiritualism was analogous to that when the classical and oriental spiritualism rose into the sphere of the educated consciousness. In both periods the marvellous "phenomena" were practically the same, and so were the perplexities, the doubts, the explanatory hypotheses, of philosophical observers. This aspect of the modern spiritualistic epidemic did not escape attention. Dr. Leonard Marsh, of the University of Vermont, published, in 1854, a treatise called *The Apocatastasis; or, Progress Backwards*. He proved that the marvels of the Foxes, of Home, and the other mediums, were the old marvels of Neo-Platonism. But he draws no conclusion, except that spiritualism is retrogressive. His book is wonderfully ill-printed; and, though he had some curious reading, his style was cumbrous, jocular, and verbose. It may, therefore, be worth while, in the light of anthropological research, to show how very closely human nature has repeated its past performances.

The new marvels were certainly not stimulated by literary knowledge of the ancient thaumaturgy. Modern spiritualism is an effort to organise and "exploit" the traditional and popular phenomena of rapping spirits and of ghosts. Belief in these had always lived an underground life in rural legend, quite unharmed by enlightenment and education. So far, it resembled the ordinary creeds of folklore. It is probable that, in addition to oral legend, there was another and more literary source of modern thaumaturgy. Books like Glanvil's, Baxter's, those of the Mathers and of Sinclair, were thumbed by the people after the literary class had forgotten them. Moreover, the Foxes, who started spiritualism, were Methodists, and may well have been familiar with "old Jeffrey," who haunted the Wesleys' house, and with some of the stories of apparitions in Wesley's *Arminian Magazine*.

If there were literary as well as legendary sources of nascent spiritualism, the sources were these. Porphyry, Iamblichus, Eusebius, and the life of Apollonius of Tyana, cannot have influenced the illiterate parents of the new thaumaturgy. This fact makes the repetition, in modern spiritualism, of Neo-Platonic theories and Neo-Platonic marvels all the more interesting and curious.

The shortest cut to knowledge of ancient spiritualism is through the letter of Porphyry to Anebo, and the reply attributed to Iamblichus. Porphyry, the disciple of Plotinus, was a seeker for truth in divine things. Prejudice, literary sentiment, and other considerations, prevented him from acquiescing in the Christian verity. The ordinary paganism shocked him, both by its obscene and undignified myths, and by many features of its ritual. He devised non-natural interpretations of its sacred legends; he looked for a visible or tangible "sign"; and he did not shrink from investigating the thaumaturgy of his age. His letter of inquiry is preserved in fragments by Eusebius and St. Augustine; Gale edited it, and, as he says, offers us an Absyrtus (the brother of Medea, who scattered his mutilated remains) rather than a Porphyry.¹ Not all of Porphyry's questions interest us for our present purpose. He asks, among other things: How can gods, as in the evocations of gods, be made subject to necessity, and *compelled* to manifest themselves?²

How do you discriminate between demons and gods that are manifest or not manifest? How does a demon differ from a hero, or from a mere soul of a dead man?

By what sign can we be sure that the manifesting agency present is that of a god, an angel, an archon, or a soul? For to boast, and to display phantasms, is common to all these varieties.³

¹ The references are to Parthey's edition, Berlin, 1857.

² καὶ λεγόμεναι ἀνάγκαι θεῶν, 4, 3.

³ All are, for Porphyry, "phantasmogenetic agencies."

In these perplexities Porphyry resembles the anxious spiritualistic inquirer. A "materialised spirit" alleges himself to be Washington, or Franklin, or the lost wife, or friend, or child of him who seeks the mediums. How is the inquirer, how was Porphyry, to know that the assertion is correct—that it is not the mere "boasting" of some vulgar spirit? In the same way, when messages are given through a medium's mouth, or by raps, or movements of a table, or a planchette, or by automatic writing, how (even discounting imposture) is the source to be verified? How is the identity of the spirit to be established? This question of discerning spirits, of identifying them, of not taking an angel for a devil, or *vice versa*, was most important in the Middle Ages. On this turned the fate of Joan of Arc: Were her voices and visions of God or of Satan? They came, as in the cases mentioned by Iamblichus, with a light, a hallucination of brilliance. When Jean Bréhal, Grand Inquisitor of France, in 1450–1456, held the process for rehabilitating Joan, condemned as a witch in 1431, he entered learnedly into the tests of "spirit-identity."¹ St. Theresa was bidden to try to exorcise her visions, by the sign of the Cross. Saint or sorcerer?—it was always a delicate inquiry.

Iamblichus, in his reply to Porphyry's doubts, first enters into theology pretty deeply; but in book ii., chap. iii., he comes, as it were, to business. The nature of the spiritual agency present on any occasion may be ascertained from his manifestations or epiphanies. All these agencies show *in a light*; we are reminded inevitably of the light which accompanied the visions of Colonel Gardiner and of Pascal. Joan of Arc, too, in reply to her judges, averred that a light (*claritas*) usually accompanied the voices which came to her.² These things, if we call them hallucinations,

were, at least, hallucinations of the good and great, and must be regarded not without reverence. But modern spiritualistic and ghostly literature is full of lights which accompany "manifestations," or attend the nocturnal invasions of apparitions. Examples are so common that they can readily be found by anyone who studies Mrs. Crowe's *Night Side of Nature*, or Home's *Life*, or *Phantasms of the Living*, or the *Proceedings of the Psychical Society*. Meantime Homer and Theocritus, in familiar passages, attest this belief in light attendant on the coming of the divine; while the Norse Sagas, and the well-known tale of Sir Charles Lee's daughter and the ghost of her mother (1662), speak for the same belief in the pre-Christian North and in the society of the Restoration.¹ A light always comes among the Eskimo, when the tornak, or familiar spirit, visits the Angekok, or sorcerer. Here, then, is harmony enough in the psychical beliefs of all time, as when we learn that lights were flashed by the spirits who beset the late Rev. Stainton Moses.² Unluckily, while we have this cloud of witnesses to the belief in a spiritual light, we are still uncertain as to whether the seeing of such a light is a physical symptom of hallucination. This is the opinion of M. Lélut, as given in his *Amulette de Pascal* (p. 301): "This globe of fire..... is a common constituent of hallucinations of sight, and may be regarded at once as their most elementary form, and their highest degree of intensity." M. Lélut knew the phenomenon among mystics whom he had observed in his practice as an "alienist." He also quotes a story told of himself by Benvenuto Cellini. If we can admit that this hallucination of brilliant light may be produced in the conditions of a *séance*, whether modern, savage, or classical, we obtain a partial solution of the problem presented by the

¹ Appended to Beaumont's work on Spirits, 1705.

² See Mr. Lillie's *Modern Mystics*, and, better, Mr. Myers, in *Proceedings S. P. R.*, January, 1894.

¹ Jean Bréhal, par P.P. Bélon et Balme, Paris, s.a., p. 105.

² *Procès de Condamnation*, i. 75.

world-wide diffusion of this belief. Of course, once accepted as an element in spiritualism, a little phosphorus supplies the modern medium with a requisite of his trade.¹

Returning to Iamblichus, he classifies his phantasmogenetic agencies by the *kind* of light they show; greater or less, more or less divided, more or less pure, steady or agitated (ii. 4). The arrival of demons is attended by disturbances.² Heroes are usually very noisy in their manifestations; a hero is a *Poltergeist*, "sounds echo around" (ii. 8). There are also subjective moods diversely generated by diverse apparitions; souls of the dead, for example, prompt to lust (ii. 9). On the whole, a great deal of experience is needed by the thaumaturgist, if he is to distinguish between one kind of manifestation and another. Even Inquisitors have differed in opinion.

Iamblichus next tackles the difficult question of imposition and personation by spirits. Thus a soul, or a spirit, may give itself out for a god, and exhibit the appropriate phantasmagoria: may boast and deceive (ii. 10). This is the result of some error or blunder in the ceremony of evocation.³ A bad or low spirit may thus enter, disguised as a demon or god, and may utter deceitful words. But all arts, says our guide, are liable to errors, and the "sacred art"

must not be judged by its occasional imperfections. We know the same kind of excuses in modern times.

Porphyry went on to ask questions about divination and clairvoyance. We often ascertain the future, he says, in dreams, when our bodies are lying still and peaceful: when we are in no convulsive ecstasy such as diviners use. Many persons prophesy "in enthusiastic and divinely seized moments, awake, in a sense, yet not in their habitual state of consciousness." Music of certain kinds, the water of certain holy wells, the vapours of Branchidæ, produce such ecstatic effects. Some "take darkness for an ally" (dark *stances*), some see visions in water, others on a wall, others in sun or moon. As an example of ancient visions in water, we may take one from the life of Isidorus, by Damascius. Isidorus and his biographer were acquainted with women who beheld in pure water in a glass vessel the phantasms of future events.¹ This form of divination is still practised, though crystal balls are more commonly used than decanters of water. Ancient and modern superstition, as in the familiar case of Dr. Dee, attributes the phantasms to spiritual agency.

Is a divine being *compelled*, Porphyry asks, to aid in these efforts, or is it only the soul of the seer, as some believe, which hallucinates itself, by the aid of *points de repère*?² Or is there a blending of the soul's operations with the divine inspiration? Or are demons in some way evolved out of something abstracted from living bodies? He seems to hint at some such theory of "exuvius fumes" from the "circle" as more recent inquirers have imagined. The young appear to be peculiarly sensitive to vapours, invocations, and other magical methods which affect the human constitution, and the young are usually engaged as seers. Hence visions are probably subjective. Ecstasy, madness,

¹ Origen, or whoever wrote the *Philosophoumena*, gives a recipe for producing a luminous figure on a wall. For moving lights he suggests attaching lighted tow to a bird, and letting it loose. Maury translates the passages in *La Magie*, pp. 58-59. Spiritualists, of course, will allege that the world-wide theory of spectral lights is based on fact, and that the hallucinations are not begotten by subjective conditions, but by a genuine "phantasmogenetic agency." Two men of science, Baron Schrenk-Notzing and Dr. Gibotteau, vouch for illusions of light accompanying attempts by *living* agents to transfer a hallucinatory vision of themselves to persons at a distance (*Journal S. P. R.*, iii. 307; *Proceedings*, viii. 476). It will be asserted by spiritualists that disembodied agencies produce the same effect in a higher degree.

² *Θορυβώδη μὲν φερόμενα τὰ ἐνὶ ὕδατι.*

³ *ἥνικα ἂν ἀμαρτήριόν τι συμβαίνει περὶ τὴν θεωρητικὴν τέχνην.*

¹ Damascius, *ap.* Photium.

² *πάνθ ἐκ μικρῶν αἰθρημάτων ἐγχερόμενα.*

fasts, and vigils seem particularly favourable to divination. Or are there certain mystic correspondences in the nature of things, which may be detected? Thus stones and herbs are used in evocations; "sacred bonds" are tied (as in the Eskimo hypnotism and in Australia); closed doors are opened, the heavenly bodies are observed. Some suppose that there is a race of false and counterfeiting spirits, which, indeed, Iamblichus admits. These act the parts of gods, demons, and souls of the dead. Again, the conjurer plays on our expectant attention. Omitting some remarks no longer appropriate, Porphyry asks what use there is in chanting barbarous and meaningless words. He is inclined to think that the demon, or guardian spirit of each man, is only part of his soul—in fact, his "subliminal self." And, generally, he suspects that the whole affair is "a mere imaginative deceit, played off on itself by the soul."

Replying as to divination, Iamblichus says that the right kind of dreams are between sleeping and waking, when we hear a voice giving directions. A modern example occurred in the trial of the Assynt murderer in 1831. One Kenneth Fraser, called "the dreamer," said in the trial: "I was at home when I had the dream. It was said to me in my sleep by a voice like a man's voice, that the pack (of the murdered pedlar) was lying in sight of the place. I got a sight of the place just as if I had been awake. I never saw the place before, but the voice said in Gaelic, 'the pack of the merchant is lying in a cairn of stones, in a hollow near to their house.' The voice did not name Macleod's house." The pack was, however, not found there, but in a place hard by, which Kenneth had not seen in his dream. Oddly enough, the murderer had originally hidden the pack, or some of its contents, in a cairn of stones, but later removed it. In the "willing game," as played by Mr. Stuart Cumberland, the seeker usually goes first to the place where the hider had thought of concealing the object, though later he

changes his mind. Macleod was hanged; he confessed his guilt.¹

Iamblichus believed in dreams of this kind, and in voices heard by men wide awake, as in the case of Joan of Arc. When an invisible spirit is present, he makes a whirring noise, like the Cock Lane Ghost!² Lights also are exhibited; the medium then by some mystic sense knows what the spirit means. The soul has two lives—one animal, one intellectual; in sleep the latter is more free, and more clairvoyant. In trance, or somnambulism, many cannot feel pain even if they are burned; the god within does not let fire harm them (iii. 4). This, of course, suggests Home's experiments in handling live coals, as Mr. Crookes and Lord Crawford describe them. Compare the Berserk "coal-biters" in the saga of Egil, and the Huron coal-biter in the preceding essay. "They do not then live an animal life." Sword points do not hurt them. Their actions are no longer human. "Inaccessible places are accessible to them, when thus borne by the gods; and they tread on fire unharmed; they walk across rivers. . . . They are not themselves, they live a diviner life, with which they are inspired, and by which they are possessed." Some are convulsed in one way, some in another, some are still. Harmonies are heard (as in Home's case and that of Mr. Stainton Moses). Their bodies are elongated (like Home's), or broadened, or float in mid-air, as in a hundred tales of mediums and saints. Sometimes the medium sees a light when the spirit takes possession of him, sometimes all present see it (iii. 6). Thus Wodrow says (as we have already shown) that Mrs. Carlyle's ancestor, Mr. Welsh, shone in a light as he meditated; and Patrick Walker tells the same tale about

¹ *Life of Hugh Macleod* (Noble, Inverness). As an example of the growth of myth, see the version of these facts in *Fraser's Magazine* for 1856. Even in a sermon preached immediately after the event, it was said that the dreamer found the pack by revelation of his dream!

² iii. 2. ποισόμενον ἐν τῷ ελπίσειν.

two of the fanatics called "Sweet Singers."

From all this it follows, Iamblichus holds, that spiritual possession is a genuine objective fact, and that the mediums act under real spiritual control. Omitting local oracles, and practices apparently analogous to the use of the planchette, Iamblichus regards the heavenly *light* as the great source of, and evidence for, the *external* and spiritual character and cause of divination (iii. 14). Iamblichus entirely rejects all Porphyry's psychological theories of hallucinations, of the demon or "genius" as "subliminal self," and asserts the actual, objective, sensible action of spirits, divine or dæmonic. What effect Iamblichus produced on the inquiring Porphyry is uncertain. In his *De Abstinētia* (ii. 39) he gives in to the notion of deceitful spirits.

In addition to the evidence of Porphyry, Iamblichus, Eusebius, and other authors of the fourth century, some recently published papyri of the same period throw a little light on the late Greek thaumaturgy.* Thus Papyrus ccxv. *verso* (about the fifth century) "contains elaborate instructions for a magical process, the effect of which is to evoke a goddess, to transform her into the appearance of an old woman, and to bind to her the service of the person using the spell....."

Obviously we would much prefer a spell for turning an old woman into a goddess. The document is headed, γρᾶνς Ἀπολλων Τυανεύς ὑπηρέτης, "the old serving-woman of Apollonius of Tyana," and it ends, ἡ πράξις δεδοκιμασται, "it is proved by practice."

You take the head of an ibis, and write certain characters on it in the blood of a black ram, and go to a cross-road, or the sea-shore, or a river-bank, at midnight; there you recite gibberish, and then see a pretty lady riding a donkey, and she will put off her beauty

like a mask, and assume the appearance of old age, and will promise to obey you—and so forth.

Here is a "constraint put on a god," as Porphyry complains. Reginald Scot, in his *Discovery of Witchcraft* (1584), has a very similar spell for alluring an airy sylph, and making her serve and be the mistress of the wizard! There is another papyrus (xlvi.), of the fourth century, with directions for divination by aid of a boy looking into a bowl, says the editor (p. 64). There is a long invocation full of "barbarous words," like the mediæval nonsense rhymes used in magic. There is a dubious reading, βαθρον or βοθρον; it is suggested that the boy is put into a pit, as it seems was occasionally done.¹ It is clear that a spirit is supposed to show the boy his visions. A spell follows for summoning a visible deity. Then we have a recipe for making a ring which will enable the owner to know the thoughts of men. The god is threatened if he does not serve the magicians. All manner of fumigations, plants, and stones are used in these idiotic ceremonies, and to these Porphyry refers. The papyrus do not illustrate the phenomena described by Iamblichus, such as the "light," levitation, music of unknown origin, the resistance of the medium to fire and sword-points, and all the rest of his list of prodigies. Iamblichus probably looked down on the believers in these spells written on papyri with extreme disdain. They are only interesting as folklore, like the rhymes of incantation preserved in Reginald Scot's *Discovery of Witchcraft*.

There were other analogies between modern, ancient, and savage spiritualism. The medium was swathed, or tied up, like the Davenport Brothers, like Eskimo and Australian conjurers, like the Highland seer in the bull's hide.² The

* See notice in *Classical Review*, February, 1894.

² See oracles in Eusebius, *Præp. Evang.*, v. 9. The medium was tied up in some way; he had to be unloosed and raised from the ground.

* *Greek Papyri in the British Museum*, edited by F. G. Kenyon, M.A. London, 1893.

medium was understood to be a mere instrument, like a flute, through which the "control," the god or spirit, spoke.¹ This is still the spiritualistic explanation of automatic speech. Eusebius goes so far as to believe that "earthbound spirits" do speak through the medium, but a much simpler theory is obvious.² Indeed, where automatic performances of any sort—by writing, by the kind of "Ouija" or table pointing to letters, as described by Ammianus Marcellinus (xxix. 29), or by speaking—are concerned, we have the aid of psychology and the theory of "unconscious cerebration" to help us. But when we are told the old tales of whirring noises, of "bilocation," of "levitation," of a mystic light, we are in contact with more difficult questions.

In brief, the problem of spiritualism in general presents itself to us thus: in ancient, modern, and savage thaumaturgy there are certain automatic phenomena. The conjurer, priest, or medium acts, or pretends to act, in various ways beyond his normal consciousness. Savages, ancient mystics, and spiritualists ascribe his automatic behaviour to the control of spirits, gods, or demons. No such hypothesis is needed.

On the other side, however, are phenomena not automatic—"spiritual" lights and sounds; interferences with natural laws, as when bodies are lifted in the air, or are elongated, when fire does not fasten on them, and so on. These phenomena, in ancient times, followed on the performance of certain mystic rites. They are now said to occur without the aid of any such rites. Gods and spirits are said to cause them;

The inspiring agency, in a hurry to be gone, gave directions for the unbinding, *παυεο δὴ πρόφρων δάρων, ἀνάπαυε δὲ φῶτα ῥάμνων ἐκλύων πολλὸν τύπον, ἡδ' ἀπὸ γυλίων Νειλῶν ὁδόνην χειρὶν στυβαράϊς ἀπαιέρας*. The binding of the Highland seer in a bull's hide is described by Scott in the *Lady of the Lake*. A modern Highland seer has ensconced himself in a boiler! The purpose is to concentrate the "force."

¹ *Praep. Evang.*, v. 8.

² *Ibid.*, v. 15, 3.

but they are only attained in the presence of certain exceptional persons—mediums, saints, priests, conjurers. Clearly, then, not the rites, but the peculiar constitution of these individuals, is the cause (setting imposture aside) of the phenomena, of the hallucinations, of the impressions, or whatever they are to be styled. That is to say, witnesses, in other matters credible, aver that they receive these peculiar impressions in the society of certain persons, and not in that of people in general. Now, these impressions are everywhere, in every age and stage of civilisation, essentially identical. Is it stretching probability almost beyond what it will bear to allege that all the phenomena, in the Arctic Circle as in Australia, in ancient Alexandria as in modern London, are always the result of an imposture modelled on savage ideas of the supernatural?

If so, we are reduced to the choice between actual objective facts of unknown origin (frequently counterfeited, of course), and the theory—which really comes to much the same thing—of identical and collective hallucinations in given conditions. On either hypothesis the topic is certainly not without interest for the student of human nature. Even if we could, at most, establish the fact that people like Iamblichus, Sir W. Crookes, Lord Crawford, Jesuits in Canada, professional conjurers in Zululand, Spaniards in early Peru, Australian blacks, Maoris, Eskimo, cardinals, ambassadors, are similarly hallucinated, as they declare, in the presence of priests, diviners, Home, Zulu magicians, Biraarks, Jossakeeds, *angakut*, *tohungas*, and saints, and Mr. Stainton Moses, still the identity of the false impressions is a topic for psychological study. Or, if we disbelieve this cloud of witnesses, if they voluntarily fabled, we ask, why do they all fable in exactly the same fashion? Even setting aside the animistic hypothesis, the subject is full of curious neglected problems.

Once more, if we admit the theory of

intentional imposture by saints, *angakut*, Zulu medicine-men, mediums, and the rest, we must grant that a trick which takes in a professional conjurer, like Mr. Kellar, is a trick well worthy of examination. How did his Zulu learn the method of Home, of the Egyptian diviners, of St. Joseph of Cupertino?¹ Each solution has its difficulties, while practical investigation is rarely possible. We have no Home with us, at present, and the opportunity of studying his effects carefully was neglected. It was equally desirable to study them whether he caused collective hallucinations, or whether his effects were merely those of ordinary, though skilful, conjuring. For Home, whatever his moral character may have been, was a remarkable survival of a class of men familiar to the mystic Iamblichus, to the savage races of the past and present, and (as far as his marvels went) to the biographers of the saints. "I am one of those," says the Zulu medicine-man, in Mr. Rider Haggard's *Allan's Wife*, "who can make men see what they do not see." The class of persons who are said to have possessed this power appear, now and then, in all human history, and have at least bequeathed to us a puzzle in anthropology. This problem has recently been presented, in what may be called an acute form, by the publication of the *Experiences of Mr. Stainton Moses*.² Mr. Moses was a clergyman and schoolmaster; in both capacities he appears to have been industrious, conscientious, and honourable. He was not devoid of literature, and had contributed, it is said, to periodicals as remote from mysticism as *Punch* and the *Saturday Review*. He was a sportsman—at least he was a disciple of our

father, Izaak Walton. "Most anglers are quiet men and followers of peace, so simply wise as not to sell their consciences to buy riches, and with them vexation, and a fear to die," says Izaak.

In early middle age, about 1874, Mr. Moses began to read such books as Dale Owen's, and to sit "attentive of his trembling" table, by way of experiment. He soon found that tables bounded in his presence, untouched. Then he developed into a regular "medium." Inanimate objects came to him through stone walls. Scent of all sorts, and, as in the case of St. Joseph of Cupertino, of an unknown sort, was scattered on people in his company. He floated in the air. He wrote "automatically." Knocks resounded in his neighbourhood, in the open air. "Lights" of all varieties hovered in his vicinity. He spoke "automatically," being the mouthpiece of a "spirit"; and very dull were the spirit's sermons. After a struggle he believed in "spirits," who twanged musical notes out in his presence. He became editor of a journal named *Light*; he joined the Psychical Society, but left it when the society pushed materialism so far as to demonstrate that certain professional mediums were convicted swindlers.

The evidence for his marvels is the testimony of a family, perfectly respectable, named Speer, and of a few other witnesses whom nobody can suspect of conscious inaccuracy. There remain, as documents, his books, his MS. notes, and other corroborative notes kept by his friend Dr. Speer, a sceptic, and other observers.

It is admitted that Mr. Moses was not a cautious logician; his inferences are problematic, his generalisations hasty. As to the facts, it is equally difficult to believe in them, and to believe that Mr. Moses was a conscious impostor, and his friends easy dupes. He cannot have been an impostor *unconsciously* in a hypnotic state, in a "trance," because

¹ Dr. Hodgson, in *Proceedings S. P. R.*, January, 1894, makes Mr. Kellar's evidence as to Indian "levitation" seem far from convincing! As a professional conjurer, and exposé of spiritualistic imposture, Mr. Kellar has made statements about his own experiences which are not easily to be harmonised.

² *Proceedings S. P. R.*, January, 1894.

his effects could not have been improvised. If they were done by jugglery, they required elaborate preparations of all sorts, which must have been made in

Iamblichus to his mystics, by the Church to her saints, by witnesses to the "possessed," by savages to medicine-men, and by Mr. Crookes and Lord Crawford

Alleged "spiritual phenomena," ancient and modern.	Rev. Stanton	Moses	D. D. Home	Iamblichus	St. Joseph of Cupertino	Eskimo	Australian	"Spontaneous" (Glanvil, Bovei, Tellat, Kirk)
"Intelligent Raps."	x	x	x				?	x
"Movement of objects untouched."	x	x	x	x		x		x
"Levitation" (floating in air of seer).	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Disappearance and re-appearance of objects.	x							x
Passage of matter through matter.	x							
Direct writing. That is, not by any detected human agency.	x	x						
Sounds made on instruments supernormally.	x	x						
Direct sounds. That is, by no detected human agency.	x	x	x					x
Scents.	x	x	x					
Lights.	x	x	x	x		x		
Objects "materialised."	x	x						
Hands materialised, touched or seen.	x	x						

The "object" being the medium in some cases.

[See page 96.

full ordinary consciousness. If we fall back on collective hallucination, then that hallucination is something of world-wide diffusion, ancient and continuous, for the effects are those attributed by

to D. D. Home. Of course, we may be told that all lookers-on, from Eskimo to Neo-Platonists and men of science, know what to expect, and are hallucinated by their own expectant attention. But

when they expect nothing, and are disappointed by having to witness prodigies, the same old prodigies, what is the explanation?

The tabular statement on page 95, altered from that given by Mr. Myers in his publication of Mr. Moses and Dr. Speer's MS. notes, will show the historical identity of the phenomena. Mr. Moses was the agent in all; those exhibited by other ancient and modern agents are marked with a cross.

There are here twelve miracles! Home and Iamblichus add to Mr. Moses's *répertoire* the alteration of the medium's height or bulk. This feat still leaves Mr. Moses "one up," as regards Home, in whose presence objects did not disappear, nor did they pass through stone walls. The questions are, to account for the continuity of collective hallucinations, if we accept that hypothesis, and to explain the procedure of Mr. Moses, if he were an impostor. He did not exhibit before more than seven or eight private friends, and he gained neither money nor dazzling social success by his performances.

This page in the chapter of "demoniac affections" is thus still in the state of *ébauche*. Mr. Moses believed his experi-

ences to be "demoniac affections," in the Neo-Platonic sense. Could his phenomena have been investigated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Parker, Messrs. Maskelyne and Cook, and Professor Huxley, the public mind might have arrived at some conclusion on the subject. But Mr. Moses's chief spirit, known in society as "Imperator," declined to let strangers look on. He testified his indignation in a manner so *bruyant*, he so banged on tables, that Mr. Moses and his friends thought it wiser to avoid an altercation.

This exclusiveness of "Imperator" certainly *donne furieusement à penser*. If spirits are spirits, they may just as well take it for understood that performances "done in a corner" are of no scientific value. But we are still at a loss for a "round" and satisfactory hypothesis which will colligate all the alleged facts, and explain their historical continuity. We merely state that continuity as a historical fact. Marvels of savages, Neo-Platonists, saints of Church or Covenant, "spontaneous" phenomena, mediumistic phenomena, all hang together in some ways. Of this the Church has her own explanation.

XI.

CRYSTAL-GAZING

THE savage, like other people, wants to discover things distant in space, or unborn in time. For such purposes he has sought out many inventions; has his mediums inspired by ghosts, his methods of divination, his clairvoyants, and his "crystal-gazers." There are many modes of gazing. We find the habit of looking

into water, usually in a vessel, preferably a glass vessel, among Red Indians (Lejeune), Romans (Varro, cited in *Civitas Dei*, iii. 457), Africans of Fez (Leo Africanus); while Maoris use a drop of blood (Taylor), Egyptians use ink (Lane), and Australian savages employ a ball of polished stone, into which the seer "puts

himself" to descry the results of an expedition.¹

We know Ellis's record of the Polynesian case. A hole being dug in the floor of his house and filled with water, the priest looks in it for a vision of the thief who has carried off stolen goods. The Polynesian theory is that the god carries the spirit of the thief over the water, in which it is reflected. Lejeune's Red Indians make their patients gaze into the water, in which they will see the pictures of the things in the way of food or medicine that will do them good. In modern language, the instinctive knowledge existing implicitly in the patient's sub-consciousness is thus brought into the range of his ordinary consciousness.

In 1887 the late Captain J. T. Bourke, of the U.S. Cavalry, an original and careful observer, visited the Apaches in the interests of the Ethnological Bureau. He learned that one of the chief duties of the medicine-men was to find out the whereabouts of lost or stolen property. Na-a-cha, one of these *jossakeeds*, possessed a magic quartz crystal, which he greatly valued. Captain Bourke presented him with a still finer crystal. "He could not give me an explanation of its magical use, except that by looking into it he could see everything he wanted to see." Captain Bourke appears never to have heard of the modern experiments in crystal-gazing. He also discovered that the Apaches, like the Greeks, Australians, Africans, Maoris, and many other races, use the bull-roarer, turndun, or *rhombos*—a piece of wood which, being whirled round, causes a strange, windy roar—in their mystic ceremonies. The wide use of the rhombos was known to Captain Bourke; that of the crystal was not.

For the Iroquois Mrs. Erminie Smith supplies information about the crystal. "Placed in a gourd of water, it could

render visible the apparition of a person who has bewitched another." She gives a case in European times of a medicine-man who found the witch's habitat, but got only an indistinct view of her face. On a second trial he was successful.² One may add that treasure-seekers among the Huille-che "look earnestly" for what they want to find "into a smooth slab of black stone, which I suppose to be basalt."³

The kindness of Monsieur Lefébure enables me to give another example from Madagascar.³ Flacourt, describing the Malagasies, says that they *squillent* (a word not in Littré)—that is, divine by crystals, which "fall from heaven when it thunders." Of course, the rain reveals the crystals, as it does the flint instruments called "thunder-bolts" in many countries. "Lorsqu'ils squillent, ils ont une de ces pierres au coing de leurs tablettes, disans qu'elle a la vertu de faire operation à le figure de geomance." Probably they used the crystals as do the Apaches. On July 15th a Malagasy woman viewed, whether in her crystal or otherwise, two French vessels which, like the Spanish fleet, were "not in sight"; also officers, and doctors, and others aboard, whom she had seen, before their return to France, in Madagascar. The earliest of the ships did not arrive till August 11th.

Dr. Callaway gives the Zulu practice, where the chief "sees what will happen by looking into the vessel."⁴ The Shamans of Siberia and Eastern Russia employ the same method.⁵ The case of the Inca Yupanqui is very curious.

¹ *Report Ethnol. Bureau*, 1887-88, p. 460; vol. ii., p. 69. Captain Bourke's volume on *The Medicine Men of the Apaches* may also be consulted.

² Fitzroy, *Adventurer*, vol. ii., p. 389.

³ *L'Histoire de la grande île Madagascar*, par le Sieur de Flacourt, Paris, 1661, ch. 76. Veue de deux Navires de France predite par les Negres, avant que l'on en peust sçavoir des Nouvelles, etc.

⁴ *Religion of the Amasulu*, p. 341.

⁵ *J. A. L.*, November, 1895, p. 155. Rychov is cited; *Zhurnal*, p. 86.

¹ Information, with a photograph of the stones, from a correspondent in West Maitland, Australia. Also Mrs. Langloh Parker, in *The Euahlayi Tribe*.

"As he came up to a fountain he saw a piece of crystal fall into it, within which he beheld a figure of an Indian in the following shape.....The apparition then vanished, while the crystal remained. The Inca took care of it, and they say that he afterwards saw everything he wanted in it."¹

Here, then, we find the belief that hallucinations can be induced by one or other form of crystal-gazing, in ancient Peru, on the other side of the continent among the Huille-che, in Fez, in Madagascar, in Siberia, among Apaches, Hurons, Iroquois, Australian black fellows, Maoris, and in Polynesia. This is assuredly a wide range of geographical distribution. We also find the practice in Greece (Pausanias, VII., xxi. 12), in Rome (Varro), in Egypt, and in India.

Though anthropologists have paid no attention to the subject, it was, of course, familiar to later Europe. "Miss X." has traced it among early Christians, in early Councils, in episcopal condemnations of *specularii*, and so to Dr. Dee, under James VI.; Aubrey; the Regent d'Orléans in St. Simon's Memoirs; the modern mesmerists (Gregory, Mayo) and the mid-Victorian spiritualists, who, as usual, explained the phenomena, in their prehistoric way, by "spirits."² Till this lady examined the subject, nobody had thought of remarking that a belief so universal had probably some basis of facts, or nobody if we except two professors of chemistry and physiology, Drs. Gregory and Mayo. Miss X. made experiments, beginning by accident, like George Sand, when a child.

The hallucinations which appear to her eyes in ink, or crystal, are:

1. Revived memories "arising thus, and thus only, from the sub-conscious strata";

"2. Objectivation of ideas or images—(a) consciously or (b) unconsciously—in the mind of the percipient;

"3. Visions, possibly telepathic or clairvoyant, implying acquirement of knowledge by supernormal means."³

The examples given of the last class, the class which would be so useful to a priest or medicine-man asked to discover things lost, are of very slight interest.⁴

Since Miss X. drew attention to this subject experiments have proved beyond doubt that a fair percentage of people, sane and healthy, can see vivid landscapes, and figures of persons in motion, in glass balls and other vehicles. This faculty Dr. Parish attributes to "dissociation," practically to drowsiness. But he speaks by conjecture, and without having witnessed experiments, as will be shown later. I now offer a series of experiments with a glass ball, coming under my own observation, in which knowledge was apparently acquired in no ordinary way. Of the absence of fraud I am personally convinced, not only by the characters of all concerned, but by the nature of the circumstances. That adaptive memory did not later alter the narratives, as originally told, I feel certain, because they were reported to me, when I was not present, within less than a week, precisely as they are now given, except in cases specially noted.

Early in 1897 I met a young lady who told me of three or four curious hallucinatory experiences of her own, which were sufficiently corroborated. She was innocent of psychical studies, had never heard of or practised crystal-gazing, and personally was in perfect health; the pale cast of thought being remote from her. I got a glass ball, and was present when she first looked into it. She saw, I remember, the interior of a house, with a full-length portrait of a person unknown. There were, I think, one or two other fancy pictures of the familiar kind. But she presently (living as she was among

¹ *Op. cit.*, v. 505.

² If any reader wishes to make experiments, be, or she, should not be astonished if the first crystal figure represents "the sheeted dead," or a person ill in bed. For some reason, or no reason, this is rather a usual prelude, signifying nothing.

³ *Rites and Laws of the Incas*, Christoval de Molina, p. 12.

⁴ See Miss X.'s article, *S.P.R. Proceedings*, v. 486.

strangers) developed a power of "seeing" persons and places unknown to her, but familiar to them. These experiences do seem to me to be good examples of what is called "thought-transference"; indeed, I never before could get out of a level balance of doubt on that subject, a balance which now leans considerably to the affirmative side. There may be abundance of better evidence, but, knowing the persons and circumstances, and being present once at what seemed to me a crucial example, I was more inclined to be convinced. This attitude appears, to myself, illogical, but it is natural and usual.

We cannot tell what indications may be accidentally given in experiments in thought-transference. But in these cases of crystal-gazing the detail was too copious to be conveyed, by a looker-on, in a wink or a cough. I do not mean to say that success was invariable. I thought of Dr. W. G. Grace, and the "scryer" saw an old man crawling along with a stick. But I doubt if Dr. Grace is very deeply seated in that mystic entity, my sub-conscious self. The "scryes" which came right were sometimes, but not always, those of which the "agent" (or person scried for) was consciously thinking. But the examples will illustrate the various kind of occurrences.

Here one should first consider the arguments against accepting recognition of objects merely described by another person. The crystal-gazer may know the inquirer so intimately as to have a very good guess at the subject of his meditation. Again, a man is likely to be thinking of a woman, and a woman of a man, so the field of conjecture is limited. In answer to the first objection I may repeat that the crystal-gazer was among strangers, all of whom, myself included, she now saw for the first time. Nor could she have studied their histories beforehand, for she could not know (normally) when she left home that she was about to be shown a glass ball, or whom she would meet. The second

objection is met by the circumstance that ladies were *not* usually picked out for men, nor men for women. Indeed, these choices were the exceptions, and in each case were marked by minutely particular details. A third objection is that credulity, or the love of strange novelties, or desire to oblige, biases the inquirers, and makes them anxious to recognise something familiar in the scryer's descriptions. In the same way we know how people recognise faces in the most blurred and vague of spiritist photographs, or see family resemblances in the most rudimentary dough-faced babies. Take descriptions of persons in a passport, or in a proclamation sketching the personal appearance of a criminal. These fit the men or women intended, but they also fit a crowd of other people. The description given by the scryer then may come right by a fortuitous coincidence, or may be too credulously recognised.

The complex of coincidences, however, could not be attributed to chance selection out of the whole possible field of conjecture. We must remember, too, that a series of such hits increases, at an enormous rate, the odds against accidental conjecture. Of such mere luck I may give an example. I was writing a story of which the hero was George Kelly, one of the "Seven Men of Moidart." A year after composing my tale I found the Government description of Mr. Kelly (1736). It exactly tallied with my purely fanciful sketch, down to eyes, and teeth, and face, except that I made my hero "about six feet," whereas the Government gave him five feet ten. But I knew beforehand that Mr. Kelly was a clergyman; his curious career proved him to be a person of great activity and geniality—and he was of Irish birth. Even a dozen such guesses, equally correct, could not suggest any powers of "vision," when so much was known beforehand about the person guessed at. I now give cases in the experience of Miss Angus, as one may call the crystal-gazer. The first occurred

the day after she got the glass ball for the first time. She writes :—

I.—A lady one day asked me to scry out a friend of whom she would think. Almost immediately I exclaimed: "Here is an old, old lady looking at me with a triumphant smile on her face. She has a prominent nose and nut-cracker chin. Her face is very much wrinkled, especially at the sides of her eyes, as if she were always smiling. She is wearing a little white shawl with a black edge. *But!* she *can't* be old, as her hair is quite brown! although her face looks so very, very old." The picture then vanished, and the lady said that I had accurately described her friend's *mother* instead of himself; that it was a family joke that the mother must dye her hair, it was so brown, and she was eighty-two years old. The lady asked me if the vision were distinct enough for me to recognise a likeness in the son's photograph; next day she laid several photographs before me, and in a moment, without the slightest hesitation, I picked him out, from his wonderful likeness to my vision!

The inquirer verbally corroborated all the facts to me, within a week, but leaned to a theory of "electricity." She has read and confirms this account.

II.—One afternoon I was sitting beside a young lady whom I had never seen or heard of before. She asked if she might look into my crystal, and while she did so I happened to look over her shoulder and saw a ship tossing on a very heavy choppy sea, although land was still visible in the dim distance. That vanished, and, as suddenly, a little house appeared with five or six (I forget now the exact number I then counted) steps leading up to the door. On the second step stood an old man reading a newspaper. In front of the house was a field of thick, stubby grass where some *lambs*, I was going to say, but they were more like very small *sheep*.....were grazing.

When the scene vanished, the young lady told me I had vividly described a spot in Shetland where she and her mother were soon going to spend a few weeks.

I heard of this case from Miss Angus within a day or two of its occurrence, and it was then confirmed to me, verbally, by the other lady. She again

confirms it (December 21st, 1897). Both ladies had hitherto been perfect strangers to each other. The old man was the schoolmaster, apparently. In her MS. Miss Angus writes "Skye," but at the time both she and the other lady said Shetland (which I have restored). In Shetland the sheep, like the ponies, are small. Fortuitous coincidence, of course, may be invoked. The next account is by another lady, say Miss Rose.

III.—Writes Miss Rose: My first experience of crystal-gazing was not a pleasant one, as will be seen from the following, which I now relate as exactly as I can remember. I asked my friend Miss Angus to allow me to look in her crystal, and, after doing so for a short time, gave up, saying it was very unsatisfactory, as, although I saw a room with a bright fire in it and a bed all curtained and people coming and going, I could not make out who they were, so I returned the crystal to Miss Angus, with the request that she might look for me. She said at once: "I see a bed with a man in it looking very ill, and a lady in black beside it." Without saying any more Miss Angus still kept looking, and, after some time, I asked to have one more look, and on her passing the ball back to me I received quite a shock, for there, perfectly clearly in a bright light, I saw stretched out in bed an old man apparently dead; for a few minutes I could not look, and on doing so once more there appeared a lady in black, and out of dense darkness a long black object was being carried, and it stopped before a dark opening overhung with rocks. At the time I saw this I was staying with cousins, and it was a Friday evening. On Sunday we heard of the death of the father-in-law of one of my cousins; of course, I knew the old gentleman was very ill; but my thoughts were not in the least about him when looking in the crystal. I may also say I did not recognise in the features of the dead man those of the old gentleman whose death I mention. On looking again on Sunday I once more saw the curtained bed and some people.

I now give Miss Angus's version of this case, as originally received from her (December, 1897). I had previously

received an oral version, from a person present at the scrying. It differed, in one respect, from what Miss Angus writes. Her version is offered because it is made independently, without consultation, or attempt to reconcile recollections :—

At a recent experience of gazing for the first time I was able to make another see what I saw in the crystal. Miss Rose called one afternoon, and begged me to look in the ball for her. I did so, and immediately exclaimed: "Oh! here is a bed, with a man in it looking very ill [I saw he was dead, but refrained from saying so], and there is a lady, dressed in black, sitting beside the bed." I did not recognise the man to be anyone I knew, so I told her to look. In a very short time she called out: "Oh! I see the bed, too! But, oh! take it away; the man is dead!" She got quite a shock, and said she would never look in it again. Soon, however, curiosity prompted her to have one more look, and the scene at once came back again; and slowly, from a misty object at the side of the bed, the lady in black became quite distinct. Then she described several people in the room, and said they were carrying something all draped in black. When she saw this she put the ball down, and would not look at it again. She called again on Sunday (this had been on Friday) with her cousin, and we teased her about being *afraid* of the crystal; so she said she would just look in it once more. She took the ball, but immediately laid it down again, saying: "No, I won't look, as the bed with the awful man in it is there again!"

When they went home they heard that the cousin's father-in-law had died that afternoon;* but to show he had never been in our thoughts, although we *all* knew he had not been well, *no one* suggested him; his name was never mentioned in connection with the vision.

"Clairvoyance," of course, is not illustrated here, the corpse being unrecognised, and the coincidence, doubtless, accidental.

* Sunday afternoon. It is not implied that the pictures on Friday were *prophetic*. Probably Miss Rose saw what Miss Angus had seen by aid of suggestion.

The next case is attested by a civilian, a slight acquaintance of Miss Angus's, who now saw him for the second time only, but better known to her family :—

IV.—On Thursday, March — ? 1897, I was lunching with my friends the Anguses, and during luncheon the conversation turned upon crystal balls and the visions that, by some people, can be seen in them. The subject arose owing to Miss Angus having just been presented with a glass ball by Mr. Andrew Lang. I asked her to let me see it, and then to try and see if she could conjure up a vision of any person of whom I might think..... I fixed my mind upon a friend, a young trooper in the [regiment named], as I thought his would be a striking and peculiar personality, owing to his uniform, and also because I felt sure that Miss Angus could not possibly know of his existence. I fixed my mind steadily upon my friend; and presently Miss Angus, who had already seen two cloudy visions of faces and people, called out: "Now I see a man on a horse most distinctly; he is dressed most queerly, and glitters all over—why, it's a soldier! a soldier in uniform; but it's not an *officer*." My excitement on hearing this was so great that I ceased to concentrate my attention upon the thought of my friend; and the vision faded away, and could not afterwards be recalled.—December 2nd, 1897.

The witness gives the name of the trooper, whom he had befriended in a severe illness. Miss Angus's own account follows; she had told me the story in June, 1897 :—

Shortly after I became the happy possessor of a "crystal," I managed to convert several very undecided "sceptics"; and I will here give a short account of my experiences with two or three of them.

One was with a Mr. —, who was so determined to baffle me, he said he would think of a friend it would not be *possible* for me to describe!

I had only met Mr. — the day before, and knew almost nothing about him or his personal friends.

I took up the ball, which immediately became misty; and out of this mist gradually a crowd of people appeared, but too indistinctly for me to recog-

anyone, until suddenly a man on horse-back came galloping along. I remember saying: "I can't describe what he is like, but he is dressed in a very queer way—in something so bright that the sun shining on him quite dazzles me, and I cannot make him out!" As he came nearer, I exclaimed: "Why, it's a *soldier* in shining armour; but it's not an *officer*—only a soldier!" Two friends who were in the room said Mr. —'s excitement was intense; and my attention was drawn from the ball by hearing him call out: "It's wonderful!—it's perfectly true! I was thinking of a young boy—a son of a crofter—in whom I am deeply interested, and who is a trooper in the —, in London—which would account for the crowd of people round him in the street!"

The next case is given, first in the version of the lady who was unconsciously scried for, and next in that of Miss Angus. The other lady writes:—

V.—I met Miss A. for the first time in a friend's house in the south of England; and one evening mention was made of a crystal ball; and our hostess asked Miss A. to look in it, and, if possible, tell her what was happening to a friend of hers. Miss A. took the crystal; and our hostess put her hand on Miss A.'s forehead to "will her." I, not believing in this, took up a book and went to the other side of the room. I was suddenly very much startled to hear Miss A., in quite an agitated way, describe a scene that had most certainly been very often in my thoughts, but of which I had never mentioned a word. She accurately described a race-course in Scotland, and an accident which happened to a friend of mine only a week or two before; and she was evidently going through the same doubt and anxiety that I did at the time as to whether he was actually killed or only very much hurt. It really was a most wonderful revelation to me, as it was the *very* first time I had seen a crystal. Our hostess, of course, was very much annoyed that she had not been able to influence Miss A., while I, who had appeared so very indifferent, should have affected her.—November 23rd, 1897.

Miss Angus herself writes:—

Another case was a rather interesting one, as I somehow got inside the thoughts

of *one* lady while *another* was doing her best to influence me!

Miss —, a friend in Brighton, has strange "magnetic" powers, and felt quite sure of success with me and the ball.

Another lady, Miss H., who was present, laughed at the whole thing, especially when Miss — insisted on holding my hand and putting her other hand on my forehead! Miss H., in a scornful manner, took up a book, and, crossing to the other side of the room, left us to our folly.

In a very short time I felt myself getting excited, which had never happened before when I looked in the crystal. I saw a crowd of people; and in some strange way I felt I was in it, and we all seemed to be waiting for something. Soon a rider came past, young, dressed for racing. His horse ambled past, and he smiled and nodded to those he knew in the crowd—and then was lost to sight.

In a moment we all seemed to feel as if something had happened, and I went through great agony of suspense trying to see what seemed *just* beyond my view. Soon, however, two or three men approached, and carried him past before my eyes; and again my anxiety was intense to discover if he were only very badly hurt, or if life were really extinct. All this happened in a few moments, but long enough to have left me so agitated that I could not realise it had only been a vision in a glass ball.

By this time Miss H. had laid aside her book, and came forward quite startled, and told me that I had accurately described a scene on a race-course in Scotland which she had witnessed just a week or two before—a scene that had very often been in her thoughts, but, as we were strangers to each other, she had never mentioned. She also said I had exactly described her own feelings at the time, and had brought it all back in a most vivid manner.

The other lady was rather disappointed that, after she had concentrated her thoughts so hard, I should have been influenced instead by one who had jeered at the whole affair.

[This anecdote was also told to me, within a few days of the occurrence, by Miss Angus. Her version was that she first saw a gentleman rider going to the

post and nodding to his friends. Then she saw him carried on a stretcher through the crowd. She seemed, she said, to be actually present, and felt somewhat agitated. The fact of the accident was, later, mentioned to me in Scotland by another lady, a stranger to all the persons.—A.L.]

VI.—I may briefly add an experiment of December 21st, 1897. A gentleman had recently come from England to the Scottish town where Miss Angus lives. He dined with her family, and about 10.15 to 10.30 p.m. she proposed to look in the glass for a scene or person of whom he was to think. He called up a mental picture of a ball at which he had recently been, and of a young lady to whom he had there been introduced. The lady's face, however, he could not clearly visualise, and Miss Angus reported nothing but a view of an empty ball-room, with polished floor and many lights. The gentleman made another effort, and remembered his partner with some distinctness. Miss Angus then described another room, not a ball-room, comfortably furnished, in which a girl with brown hair drawn back from her forehead, and attired in a high-necked white blouse, was reading, or writing letters, under a bright light in an unshaded glass globe. The description of the features, figure, and height tallied with Mr. —'s recollection; but he had never seen this Geraldine of an hour except in ball dress. He and Miss Angus noted the time by their watches (it was 10.30), and Mr. — said that on the first opportunity he would ask the young lady how she had been dressed and how employed at that hour on December 21st. On December 22nd he met her at another dance, and her reply corroborated the crystal picture. She had been writing letters, in a high-necked white blouse, under an incandescent gas lamp with an unshaded glass globe. She was entirely unknown to Miss Angus, and had only been seen once by Mr. —. Mr. — and the

lady of the crystal picture corroborated all this in writing.

I now suggested an experiment to Miss Angus, which, after all, was clearly not of a nature to establish a "test" for sceptics. The inquirer was to write down, and enclose in an envelope, a statement of his thoughts; Miss Angus was to do the same with her description of the picture seen by her; and these documents were to be sent to me, without communication between the inquirer and the crystal-gazer. Of course, this could in no way prove absence of collusion, as the two parties might arrange privately beforehand what the vision was to be.

Indeed, nobody is apt to be convinced, or shaken, unless he is himself the inquirer and a stranger to the seeress, as the people in these experiments were. Evidence interesting to *them*—and, in a secondary degree, to others who know them—can thus be procured; but strangers are left to the same choice of doubts as in all reports of psychological experiences, "chromatic audition," views of coloured numerals, and the other topics illustrated by Mr. Galton's interesting researches.

In this affair of the envelopes the inquirer was a Mr. Pembroke, who had just made Miss Angus's acquaintance, and was but a sojourner in the land. He wrote, before knowing what Miss Angus had seen in the ball:—

VII.—On Sunday, January 23rd, 1908, while Miss Angus was looking in the crystal ball, I was thinking of my brother, who was, I believe, at that time, somewhere between Sabathu (Punjab, India) and Egypt. I was anxious to know what stage of his journey he had reached.

Miss Angus saw, and wrote, before telling Mr. Pembroke:—

A long and very white road, with tall trees at one side; on the other, a river or lake of greyish water. Blue sky, with a crimson sunset. A great black ship is anchored near, and on the deck I see a man lying, apparently very ill. He is a powerful-looking man, fair, and very much bronzed. Seven or eight Englishmen, in

very light clothes, are standing on the road beside the boat.

January 23rd, 1898.

"A great black ship," anchored in "a river or lake," naturally suggests the Suez Canal, where, in fact, Mr. Pembroke's brother was just arriving, as was proved by a letter received from him eight days after the experiment was recorded, on January 31st. At that date Mr. Pembroke had not yet been told the nature of Miss Angus's crystal picture, nor had she any knowledge of his brother's whereabouts.

In February, 1898, Miss Angus again came to the place where I was residing. We visited together the scene of an historical crime, and Miss Angus looked into the glass ball. It was easy for her to "visualise" the incidents of the crime (the murder of Cardinal Beaton), for they are familiar enough to many people. What she did see in the ball was a tall, pale lady, "perhaps forty, but looking thirty-five," with hair drawn back from the brows, standing beside a high chair, dressed in a wide farthingale of stiff grey brocade, without a ruff. The costume corresponds well (as we found) with that of 1546, and I said, "I suppose it is Mariotte Ogilvy"—to whom Miss Angus's historical knowledge (and perhaps that of the general public) did not extend. Mariotte was the Cardinal's lady-love, and was in the Castle on the night before the murder, according to Knox. She had been in my mind, whence (on the theory of thought transference) she may have passed to Miss Angus's mind; but I had never speculated on Mariotte's costume. Nothing but conjecture, of course, comes of these apparently "retrospective" pictures; though a most singular and picturesque coincidence occurred, which may be told in a very different connection.

The next example was noted at the same town. The lady who furnishes it is well known to me, and it was verbally corroborated by Miss Angus, to whom the lady, her absent nephew, and all about her, were entirely strange:—

VIII.—I was very anxious to know

whether my nephew would be sent to India this year, so I told Miss Angus that I had thought of something, and asked her to look in the glass ball. She did so, but almost immediately turned round and looked out of the window at the sea, and said: "I saw a ship so distinctly I thought it must be a reflection." She looked in the ball again, and said: "It is a large ship, and it is passing a huge rock with a lighthouse on it. I can't see who are on the ship, but the sky is very clear and blue. Now I see a large building, something like a club, and in front there are a great many people sitting and walking about. I think it must be some place abroad, for the people are all dressed in very light clothes, and it seems to me very sunny and warm. I see a young man sitting on a chair, with his feet straight out before him. He is not talking to anyone, but seems to be listening to something. He is dark and slight, and not very tall; and his eyebrows are dark and very distinctly marked."

I had not had the pleasure of meeting Miss Angus before, and she knew nothing whatever about my nephew; but the young man described was exactly like him, both in his appearance and in the way he was sitting.

In this case thought transference may be appealed to. The lady was thinking of her nephew in connection with India. It is not maintained, of course, that the picture was of a prophetic character.

The following examples have some curious and unusual features. On Wednesday, February 2nd, 1897, Miss Angus was looking in the crystal, to amuse six or seven people whose acquaintance she had that day made. A gentleman, Mr. Bissett, asked her "what letter was in his pocket." She then saw, under a bright sky, and, as it were, a long way off, a large building, in and out of which many men were coming and going. Her impression was that the scene must be abroad. In the little company present, it should be added, was a lady, Mrs. Cockburn, who had considerable reason to think of her young married daughter, then at a place about fifty miles away. After Miss

Angus had described the large building and crowds of men, someone asked, "Is it an exchange?" "It might be," she said. "Now comes a man in a great hurry. He has a broad brow, and short, curly hair; ¹ hat pressed low down on his eyes. The face is very serious; but he has a delightful smile." Mr. and Mrs. Bissett now both recognised their friend and stockbroker, whose letter was in Mr. Bissett's pocket.

The vision, which interested Miss Angus, passed away, and was interrupted by that of a hospital nurse, and of a lady in a *peignoir*, lying on a sofa, *with bare feet*.² Miss Angus mentioned this vision as a bore, she being more interested in the stockbroker, who seems to have inherited what was once in the possession of another stockbroker—"the smile of Charles Lamb." Mrs. Cockburn, for whom no pictures appeared, was rather vexed, and privately expressed with freedom a very sceptical opinion about the whole affair. But on Saturday, February 5th, 1897, Miss Angus was again with Mr. and Mrs. Bissett. When Mrs. Bissett announced that she had "thought of something," Miss Angus saw a walk in a wood or garden, beside a river, under a brilliant blue sky. Here was a lady, very well dressed, twirling a white parasol on her shoulder as she walked, in a curious "stumpy" way, beside a gentleman in light clothes, such as are worn in India. He was broad-shouldered, had a short neck and a straight nose, and seemed to listen, laughing, but indifferent, to his obviously vivacious companion. The lady had a "drawn" face, indicative of ill-health. Then followed a scene in which the man, without the lady, was looking on at a number of Orientals busy in the felling of trees. Mrs. Bissett recognised, in the lady, her sister, Mrs. Clifton, in India—above all, when Miss Angus

gave a realistic imitation of Mrs. Clifton's walk, the peculiarity of which was caused by an illness some years ago. Mrs. and Mr. Bissett also recognised their brother-in-law in the gentleman seen in both pictures. On being shown a portrait of Mrs. Clifton as a girl, Miss Angus said it was "like, but too pretty." A photograph done recently, however, showed her the "drawn face" of the crystal picture.³

Next day, Sunday, February 6th, Mrs. Bissett received—what was not usual—a letter from her sister in India, Mrs. Clifton, dated January 20th. Mrs. Clifton described a place in a native State, where she had been at a great "function," in certain gardens beside a river. She added that they were going to another place for a certain purpose, "and then we go into camp till the end of February." One of Mr. Clifton's duties is to direct the clearing of wood preparatory to the formation of the camp, as in Miss Angus's crystal picture.² The sceptical Mrs. Cockburn heard of these coincidences, and an idea occurred to her. She wrote to her daughter, who has been mentioned, and asked whether, on Wednesday, February 2nd, she had been lying on a sofa in her bed-room, with bare feet. The young lady confessed that it was indeed so;³ and, when she heard how the fact came to be known, expressed herself with some warmth on the abuse of glass balls, which tend to rob life of its privacy.

In this case the *primâ facie* aspect of things is that a thought of Mr. Bissett's about his stockbroker, *dulce ridentem*, somehow reflected itself into Miss Angus's mind by way of the glass ball, and was interrupted by a thought of

¹ I saw the photographs.

² Miss Angus could not be sure of the colour of the hair.

³ The position was such that Miss Angus could not see the face of the lady.

² I have been shown the letter of January 20th, which confirmed the evidence of the crystal pictures. The camp was formed for official purposes in which Mr. Clifton was concerned. A letter of February 9th unconsciously corroborates.

³ The incident of the feet occurred at 4.30 to 7.30 p.m. The crystal picture was about 10 p.m.

Mrs. Cockburn's as to her daughter. But how these thoughts came to display the unknown facts concerning the garden by the river, the felling of trees for a camp, and the bare feet, is a question about which it is vain to theorise.¹

On the vanishing of the jungle scene there appeared a picture of a man in a dark undress uniform, beside a great bay, in which were ships of war. Wooden huts, as in a plague district, were on shore. Mr. Bissett asked, "What is the man's expression?" "He looks as if he had been giving a lot of last orders." Then appeared "a place like a hospital, with five or six beds—no, berths; it is a ship. Here is the man again." He was minutely described, one peculiarity being the way in which his hair grew—or, rather, did not grow—on his temples.

Miss Angus now asked, "Where is my little lady?"—meaning the lady of the twirling parasol and *staccato* walk. "Oh, I've left off thinking of her," said Mrs. Bissett, who had been thinking of, and recognised in, the officer in undress uniform, her brother, the man with the singular hair, whose face, in fact, had been scarred in that way by an encounter with a tiger. He was expected to sail from Bombay, but news of his setting forth has not been received (February 10th) at the moment when this is written.²

In these Indian cases "thought-transference" may account for the correspondence between the figures seen by Miss Angus and the ideas in the mind of Mr. and Mrs. Bissett. But the hypothesis of thought-transference, while it would

cover the wooden huts at Bombay (Mrs. Bissett knowing that her brother was about to leave that place), can scarcely explain the scene in the garden by the river and the scene with the trees. The incident of the bare feet may be regarded as a fortuitous coincidence, since Miss Angus saw the young lady foreshortened, and could not describe her face.

The reader may have already observed that the phenomena which apparently point to some unaccountable supernormal faculty of acquiring knowledge are "trivial." These anecdotes illustrate the triviality; but the facts certainly left a number of people, wholly unfamiliar with such experiments, under the impression that Miss Angus's glass ball was like Prince Ali's magical telescope in the *Arabian Nights*.³ These experiments, however, occasionally touch on intimate personal matters, and cannot be reported in such instances.

It will be remarked that the faculty is freakish, and does not always respond to conscious exertion of thought in the mind of the inquirer. Thus, in Case I., a connection of the person thought of is discerned; in another the mind of a stranger present seems to be read. In another case (not given here) the inquirer tried to visualise a card for a person present to guess, while Miss Angus was asked to describe an object which the inquirer was acquainted with, but which he banished from his conscious thought. The double experiment was a double-barrelled success.

It seems hardly necessary to point out that chance coincidence will not cover this set of cases, where in each "guess" the field of conjecture is boundless, and is not even narrowed by the crystal-gazer's knowledge of the persons for whose diversion she makes the experiment. As "muscle-reading" is not in question (in the one case of contact

¹ Miss Angus had only within the week made the acquaintance of Mrs. Cockburn and the Bissetts. Of these relations of theirs at a distance she had no knowledge.

² I have seen a photograph of this gentleman, Major Hamilton, which tallies with the full description given by Miss Angus, as reported by Mrs. Bissett. All the proper names here, as throughout, are altered. This account I wrote from the verbal statement of Mrs. Bissett. It was then read and corroborated by herself, Mr. Bissett, Mr. Cockburn, Mrs. Cockburn, and Miss Angus, who added dates and signatures.

³ The letters attesting each of these experiments are in my possession. The real names are in no case given in this account, by my own desire, but (with permission of the persons concerned) can be communicated privately.

between inquirer and crystal-gazer the results were unexpected), and as no unconsciously made signs could convey, for example, the idea of a cavalry soldier in uniform, or an accident on a race-course in two *tableaux*, I do not at present see any more plausible explanation than that of thought-transference, though how that is to account for some of the cases given I do not precisely understand.

Anyone who can accept the assurance of my personal belief in the good faith of all concerned will see how very useful this faculty of crystal-gazing must be to the Apache or Australian medicine-man or Polynesian priest. Freakish as the faculty is, a few real successes, well exploited and eked out by fraud, would set up a wizard's reputation. That a faculty of being thus affected is genuine seems proved, apart from modern evidence, by the world-wide prevalence of crystal-gazing in the ethnographic region. But the discovery of this prevalence had not been made, to my know-

ledge, before modern instances induced me to notice the circumstances, sporadically recorded in books of travel.

The phenomena are certainly of a kind to encourage the savage theory of the wandering soul. How else, thinkers would say, can the seer visit the distant place or person, and correctly describe men and scenes which, in the body, he never saw? Or they would encourage the Polynesian belief that the "spirit" of the thing or person looked for is suspended by a god over the water, crystal, blood, ink, or whatever it may be. Thus, to anthropologists, the discovery of crystal-gazing as a thing widely diffused and still flourishing ought to be grateful, however much they may blame my childish credulity. I may add that I have no ground to suppose that crystal-gazing will ever be of practical service to the police, or to persons who have lost articles of portable property. But I have no objection to experiments being made at Scotland Yard.¹

¹ The faculty of seeing "fancy pictures" in the glass is far from uncommon. I have met with only three other persons besides Miss Angus, two of them men, who had any success in "telepathic" crystal-gazing. Mr. Starr, an American critic, adds Cherokees, Aztecs, and Tonkaways to the ranks of crystal-gazers.

XII.

THEORIES OF THE ORIGINS OF RELIGION

MEN have applied all conceivable keys to the lock of that old problem, the Origin of Religion. The key of anthropological science is the most promising. We study man in every known stage of culture; we almost universally find him in possession of a religion of some sort; we observe that the religions of the most civilised races have points in common with those of the most untutored peoples

—and we ask: How did early man arrive at these ideas?

Two great difficulties meet us on the threshold of the inquiry—(1) There is no accepted definition of religion; what one student calls religion another may deny to be religion, or may class as magic. Lord Avebury speaks of some tribes as destitute of "true religion," without saying what he means by

"true." Perhaps no two inquirers define religion in precisely the same way. Some maintain that nothing is religion which does not involve cult or worship. Yet Coleridge reckoned himself a religious man at a time when he never prayed, or, I presume, went to church—unless as preacher, perhaps.

Men may have so exalted a notion of Deity that they deem it wiser to practise no cult of any kind. The belief suffices them, and it would hardly be scientific to say that, if they have the belief, they are without religion. Their attitude is not uncommon among the most backward savages known to us, though *their* motive for assuming the attitude is probably unanalysed by themselves, or expressed only in myths. To them I could not deny religion, decadent or in germ.

Again, some may define religion as of necessity *spiritual*. Yet, as I shall show, there are many low savages who do not envisage the supreme, or, if you prefer it, superior, being of their belief as a *spirit*. He is usually styled "the Great Spirit" by European and other educated modern observers; but, as Mr. Howitt has also noticed, the Australians do not predicate spirituality of their "All Father," where belief in an All Father exists. To them he is merely an anthropomorphic being, usually without known beginning, usually conceived of as prior to, and not subject to, death. He "can go everywhere, and do everything," and "sees all that you do." That is, in modern words, he is eternal, omnipotent, and omnipresent, or omniscient. But he is only all that in a *general* statement. Like the gods of the classical mythologies, he is, in myth, represented as having been under all sorts of practical limitations during his period of residence on earth. In myth he is often absurd, and far from estimable—a point considered in our conclusion.

The important thing to observe is that, by native "theologians," the idea of spirituality is not applied to this being; not that these speculators are

destitute of the conception of spirituality. They believe in spirits of the living and of the dead, but they do not extend the category of spirit to the being who can go everywhere and do everything, and who, as a rule, inhabits a world of his own above the sky. Save that he is, by some tribes, obeyed; that dances are performed in his honour; that his effigy is made, on some religious occasions, and destroyed when the rites are ended; that the tribal rites are under the auspices of himself or of his deputy; that his name is invoked at the rites—he has usually no cult, and even this amount of cult is rather infrequent. Yet my own conception of religion does not regard a tribe with such a non-spiritual All Father as without religion. He comes under my idea of religion—in germ or in decadence, as the case may be.

Transfer to such a being the idea of spirituality, approach him with prayer or with sacrifice, and he would, by most people, be called a "god." I do not call him a god, but merely an element in religious belief, though there are definitions of religion which exclude him, while admitting, as a factor in religion, a man's grandfather's ghost—at least, if food is placed on the grave. If you define religion as the belief in spirits, or in divinised living men, to whom folk give gifts that they may receive gifts in return, the All Father, who is not envisaged as a spirit, but merely as a potent *being*, and who receives no gifts, and is asked for none, does not come under your definition of religion. Whether you can wisely afford to ignore such a being is another question. If you do, you have an easier task in looking for the origin of religion, as we shall see; but you leave out of sight what may be a very important factor.

The difficulty of defining religion also presents itself when we consider totemism. However the totemistic belief and body of customs may have arisen—whether it was, at first, a mere way

of naming alien human groups (as I suppose), or whether it arose from the doctrine of spirits (as in Mr. Frazer's latest theory)—it has at least associations and relations with religion in just so far as it implies a mystic and super-sensual or transcendental relation, with duties on either side, between a man and his totem; while it probably accounts for certain attributes of deities in more advanced civilisations, as in that of Egypt, and, in some instances, accounts for animal-worship.

Recently a new element in, or bordering on, religion among backward races has attracted much attention. There are, in some North American, Melanesian, Australian, African, and other languages, such words as *mana* (Melanesian), *wakan* (Dakotah), *orenda* (Huron), and *kutchi* (Australian), and so forth, which mean "what inspires awe," or mean "mystic power," or the vehicle, or *milieu*, or atmosphere, of "mystic power"—much like our "ether" in physical science. A man has much or little *mana*—"he has the power," as used to be said in Scotland; he is potent, somehow. One can scarcely call this conception, so far, "religious." *Mana* or *wakan* is conceived as something like ether, something in the nature of things. People began, I presume, by working magic on the lines of "sympathy." Similar things, they held, have similar effects—like influences like. A man may be injured by injuring an image or picture of him; as also by injuring something once part of him—parings of his nails, a lock of his hair; or by deft use of something essentially his, such as his name; or, sometimes, by destroying "to his intention" an object of the species of his totem. These things people would do, and would believe that they more or less succeeded. Indeed, they would often succeed in evil magic or love-magic by "suggestion." The man aimed at, knowing that he is being bewitched, may sicken and die of fear; the woman

who knows that love-magic is being worked for her may fall in love.

One would call these ideas and practices "magical," not "religious." On this point there is fairly general agreement. No *personal* power is invoked, no prayer is made; and, as long as that is so, the practices are magical. Whether they become religious when a spirit is invoked to aid is a question of definition. But many backward peoples have speculated on the *causa causans*, and the mode of operation, of magic. They want to get at the metaphysics of it, and have decided that in magic there is a kind of ether, or *milieu*, in which, and by virtue of which, the processes work. It is *mana*, *wakan*, *orenda*, and so forth. It is power, *rapport*, it may attach to men, or to strange odd things, queer stones, shells, roots, mountains, or to discarnate spirits, never human, or to ghosts of the dead, or to gods; but it is also a thing in itself, is subtle, impalpable, all-pervading power. A curious little modern example occurs in Perrault's tale of *Blue Beard*. The key of Blue Beard's chamber "was *fée*"; it was no ordinary key, it had *mana*. *Mana*, or *orenda*, or *wakan*, or *kutchi*, has much the same sense as Reuss, quoted by Professor Huxley, attributes to the Hebrew term *Elohim*, which "expresses something divine—that is to say, superhuman, commanding respect and terror," and is applied to spirits, and to God.*

If these ideas are correct, *Elohim* originally has much the same wide sense as *mana*, *kutchi*, or *mulungu* in East Africa. But, while gods, like many other things and people, participate in *mana*, all that has *mana* is not a god; nor is *mana*, in itself, usually regarded as divine, or even as personal. Among the Dakotah, however, prayers, often of

* Huxley, "The Evolution of Theology" (*Science and Hebrew Tradition*, p. 298). Other analogous interpretations are given of *Elohim*. There are, I think, seven philological guesses at the original sense of the word, as far as Hebrew dictionaries show.

a sublime character, are addressed to *Wakan*, which, as capable of being affected by prayer, is clearly as personal in this instance as powerful, and surely is "something very like a god," though the word *wakan* is also applied in its usual senses.¹

As soon as prayer for the fulfilment of *Wakan's* will is addressed to *Wakan*, as it is, we may, I think, regard the prayer as religious, and distinct from, say, burning a man's hair with an eye to making him have a headache, in which operation *wakan* is only the hypothetical ether that conveys the physical effect. We do not know whether the *personal Wakan*, addressed in prayer, is a personification of *wakan* in general (in which case a god has been evolved in an interesting way, well deserving attention), or whether the *Dacotah* have otherwise attained to the conception of a god, distinguished as *Wakan*, "the Powerful One." But this case is, apparently, of an unusual class; we hear of no worship of *Orenda*, or *Mana*, or *Kutchi*.

Meanwhile a god may be *Wakan*, but all things *wakan* are not gods. In the same way a ghost, as of *Samuel*, might be spoken of as *Elohim*, but it would not follow that *Elohim*, *par excellence*, had once been a ghost.² Taking, for the sake of argument, *Elohim* as equivalent to *mana*, *orenda*, *wakan*, the highest deity of which the mind can conceive

has, in a supreme degree, the quality of everything else which is *mana*, and is *Mana* (or *Elohim*?) *par excellence*. But how men came to conceive of such a deity is a question variously answered.

I have not offered a definition of religion, because none that has been given satisfies all thinkers, or is likely to satisfy. But, in a general way, I have tried to show what I myself mean by religion, and that I regard as religious the honours paid by some races to "the most sacred majesty" of their living king, who appears to be looked on as especially rich in *mana* or transcendental power. I also consider as religious all propitiation of spirits, whether of dead men or of spirits that never were incarnated; all worship of spiritual gods, and all belief in a superior or supreme being not regarded, or not explicitly described, as spiritual, whether the belief is expressed in cult or not.

This is rather a description than a definition of what I mean by religion, and it does not include "the Religion of Humanity," mainly because nobody thinks *that* the original form of religion.

(2) Our second great difficulty is that we cannot possibly go back to the beginning of things, and see man at the stage in which the first germs of religion become apparent in him. They may have been wonder, astonishment, awe, sense of weakness, sense of ignorance, sense of power, sense of vitality, and of personality; but these emotions can scarcely have produced religion till man began to speculate on them, and on what awakened them; to ask himself for a reasonable account of them, and of himself; and to brood on the ideas of power and of personality. He was conscious of power in himself, of animation, of personality, of using things, of making things, of love and hatred. He made experiments in "sympathetic magic," and persuaded himself that they were successful; that some men were more successful than others; and he evolved the idea of *mana*, of transcendental power, not merely physical and muscular.

¹ Miss Fletcher, *The Import of the Totem*. Salem Press, Mas., 1897.

² There is a good account of *mana* in Bishop Codrington's book, *The Melanians*. See, on the whole subject, Hubert and Mauss, *Théorie Générale de la Magie* (*L'Année Sociologique*, 1904, pp. 107-22). Cf. Hewitt, *American Anthropologist*, 1902, vol. iv., chap. i., pp. 32-46. The Algonquin *Manitou* is a term of the same sort; it is usually translated "medicine"—a man has "great medicine"—that is, *mana*; while spirits are called *manitou*, and we hear of "the Great Manitou," or supreme being. The French writers do not appear to remark on *Wakan* as a personal being, addressed in prayer; and, as I understand Miss Fletcher, she does not recognise that prayer can be addressed only to a being conceived as personal.

Man must have speculated thus, under the stress of a need for answers to his own curiosity about himself and the world, before he could begin to be definitely religious. His wonder, fear, awe, curiosity, and so on, were faculties tending towards the evolution of religion; but before they had been reasoned upon by man they could not crystallise into conscious religion. Our difficulty is to find any people about which we can say with certainty that its emotions and reflections have, so far, failed to produce religion. I am not affirming or denying the existence of a wholly irreligious race; but, if we find it, are we certain that it never had a religion in the past?

In Australia, as is well known, where culture is on the lowest level extant, some tribes have the "All Father" belief, already described; others apparently do not possess it. These tribes do not pray to higher powers; they think their own magic sufficient. They have no idea of a future, of rewards and punishments, elsewhere; not that their spirits are mortal, but that they are constantly reincarnated on earth. The best type of these tribes are the Arunta of Central Australia, as known to Messrs. Spencer and Gillen.¹ But among the Arunta of another adjacent region, as among the neighbouring Loritja tribe, to the west, Mr. Strehlow finds All Fathers, Altjira and Tukura;² while among the Kaitish, also in contact with the Arunta, Messrs. Spencer and Gillen find a sky-dwelling, self-created being, Atnatu, who is credited with making the beginning of things, being the father of men, and with instituting rites, and punishing mortals who neglect them. As all these tribes are on the same level of physical culture, it is impossible for us to say dogmatically that the Arunta, and tribes equally All Fatherless, have never attained to so much religion as is implied in that belief. They may never have done so; or, again, they may have done so, and

dropped a creed inconsistent with their actual philosophy—which is that of evolution, with some assistance from self-created beings named *Ungambikula*. To them and their philosophy I shall return.

Attempts have been made to find equations between the physical environment of tribes with or without the All Father belief, on the one hand; and the presence or absence of the belief, on the other hand. But these equations are unsatisfactory. If, as is asserted, coastal conditions, sufficient rains, food enough, tend to produce the All Father belief, how has it arrived among the Kaitish, Loritja, and Mr. Strehlow's Arunta, who are as remote as may be from the coast, dwelling in the plumb centre of Australia? Again, if coastal conditions and better and more abundant food are the conditions of the growth of the All Father belief, why have they *not* produced it among the Anula and Mara, northern coastal tribes visited by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, or among the Torres Straits islanders, described by Mr. Hudson, north of Australia? These explorers find no such tenet among Torres Straits Islanders, or the Mara and Anula, or any other northern coastal tribe. In the South-East of Australia Mr. Howitt finds the belief among tribes with female and tribes with male descent, tribes near the sea and tribes remote from the sea. Thus we have the alleged coastal cause without the religious effect, and the religious effect without the alleged coastal cause.

In these circumstances we can only note the facts, and await further information. We cannot go back to the beginnings, even among a people so low in culture, yet so speculative, as the dusky natives of Australia. Speculation seems to have led some great aggregates of tribes to a theory of evolution, *plus* reincarnated spirits, and the *Ungambikula*. Other tribes, even tribes adjacent to these, have been led by speculation to belief in beings like Atnatu, self-created, deathless, and more or less

¹ *Native Tribes of Central Australia*.

² *Globus*, XCI. (1907), No. 18.

paternal in their relations to mankind. Which of the two doctrines is the earlier is matter for conjecture and later discussion.

It is denied by none that a belief in spirits is universal, and that the belief is a most potent factor in the evolution of religion. It is commonly called Animism, or, by Mr. Herbert Spencer, the Ghost Theory. Anthropologists differ as to whether or not animism is the one and only source of religion. While some (1), like Mr. Tylor and Mr. Spencer, have maintained this view, others (2) hold that religions may have existed, and, indeed, exist, not based on animism, though the men who hold these religions believe in spirits. People may believe in spirits, without worshipping or propitiating them; their religious belief may be unspiritual, destitute of spiritual origin. None the less, spiritualism is likely, in course of time, to invade, and perhaps to overthrow, the belief in the superior being of the non-spiritual faith.

My own opinion is in favour of this second theory, which may be called a kind of anthropological heresy, so prevalent is the view maintained by the vast learning and sober judgment of Mr. Tylor. My hypothesis was thrust upon me by the facts of religion, as I seemed to discern them.

Let us take a popular exposition of the doctrine of animism as the source of religion. Professor Huxley has bequeathed to us an essay styled "The Evolution of Theology: An Anthropological Study."¹ Writing before 1895, Mr. Huxley was unacquainted with many facts since brought to general notice, though even in his time these facts, in less abundant measure, were familiar to all who cared to look for them; for example, to the great German anthropologist, Waitz.² Mr. Huxley began not with an examination of the facts of religion among backward peoples, but by scrutinising what he called "the

fossiliferous strata of the Old Testament." He meant such books as Judges and Samuel, which he regarded as containing archaic matter, "fossils," and as comparatively free from "late interpolation and editorial trimming." He found "an important fossil" in the story of the Witch of Endor (1 Samuel xxviii.). Here we learn that Saul, receiving no information from "Jahveh" by dreams, "by Urim" (whatever that may be), "or by prophets," took what he himself thought a heterodox course; and, though he had banished mediums (such as "have familiar spirits"), consulted a woman who had what spiritualists style a "control." Orthodoxy regarded the Supreme Being, Jahveh, as the only proper source of supernormal information. Jahveh being hostile, another source, a familiar spirit and a medium, had to be approached.

"Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo" ("If I cannot bend the high powers, I will stir hell"), thought Saul. Saul, however, did not really think of "higher powers," but of one high power, Jahveh. If the passage be not "a late interpolation," Israel already believed in a Supreme Being. Saul (who, though in disguise, was "kenspeckle," being by far the tallest man in his kingdom), approaches the witch, who asks, "Whom shall I bring up to thee?" "Samuel," says the king. She can scarcely have been in the way of saying that her "control," as the mediums call it, was the spirit of Samuel! When the woman saw Samuel, she cried: "Why hast thou deceived me, for thou art Saul?" Shall we say that the woman had, *subconsciously*, detected Saul, and that her knowledge was automatically brought into *her ordinary consciousness* by a hallucinatory phantasm of Samuel? In any case, the king said: "Be not afraid, for what sawest thou?" Saul was not hallucinated; he saw nothing. The woman replied, "I saw Elohim ascending out of the earth." (By "Elohim," here, I understand her to have meant *manitou*, a shape of power and dread.) Her description of

¹ *Science and Hebrew Tradition*; London, 1895.

² *Anthropologie der Naturvölker*, 1870.

what she saw, an old man in a cloak, persuaded Saul that Samuel was present, and a conversation ensued. Mr. Huxley held, and probably with reason, that the woman did the speaking, as Mrs. Piper does; Dr. Phinuit, Samuel, or any other "control," using her vocal organs. Mr. Huxley, accepting the narrative as veracious "as far as the intention of the narrator goes," draws his inferences as to theology in the time of the narrator. Men believed that the spirits of the dead, under the control of Jahveh, went to Sheol, their own place, as in the song of Hannah:—

Jahveh killeth and maketh alive;
He bringeth down to Sheol, and bringeth up.
—1 Samuel ii. 6.

The songs in the Old Testament are, I believe, regarded as old; if so, the belief in Jahveh, with his power over spirits, is old. We may compare Samuel in Sheol to the Theban prophet, Teiresias, in Hades—in the *Odyssey*. Teiresias alone retains all his faculties, knows what is occurring on earth (the other spirits in Homer's Hades do not), and Teiresias also retains his faculty of precognition; he foretells events. (Mr. Huxley does not remark on this curious parallel.)

Mr. Huxley justly concludes that the Hebrews believed in the continued existence of spirits (at the time when the narrative was written), but had no idea of retribution, any more than Homer; indeed, not so much. The notion of retribution, however, is common among Australian tribes, infinitely less civilised than the Israelites of the age of iron and of writing.

Mr. Huxley next discusses, as we saw, the meaning of *Elohim*, quoting Reuss, Tuch, Thenius, and Dr. Kitto's Dictionary. *Elohim* is "something superhuman, commanding terror and respect," and, though the word is plural, in Mr. Huxley's opinion here it means "a solitary spectre"; Saul asks "what form is *he* of?"

It is important, Mr. Huxley says, "that the name of *Elohim* is applied to a ghost or a disembodied soul" as well as

to the gods of the heathen, while Jahveh is "a species of the genus" to which ghosts belong.

It is precisely here that I venture to differ from Mr. Huxley. The name *Elohim* is more extensive than the species ghost. Ghosts are *Elohim*—*mana*, *wakan*, *orenda*, *kutichi*—things of mystic and dread potency—and Jahveh is of the same category, so far. But it does not follow that Jahveh was originally a ghost. Anything that has *mana*—even an odd stone or a strange bird—is *mana*, *wakan*, *elohim*, but is not and never was a ghost. By parity of reasoning, Jahveh need not have been originally envisaged as a spirit; but, like the Australian All Fathers—Baiaame, Atnatu, Mungan-ngaua (Our Father), Mulkari, Nurrundere, Pir-meheal, and so on—as a Being, anthropomorphic, deathless, a maker of things, a ruler, a father.

On the anthropomorphic aspect of Jehovah Mr. Huxley insists with justice. In early Israel Jahveh was certainly regarded as anthropomorphic, just as Baiaame is so regarded. But there appears no reason for supposing that Jahveh, any more than Atnatu or Baiaame, was originally looked on either as a spirit or as a ghost. The oldest parts of the Old Testament never speak of him as a spirit.

Both as named "*Elohim*" and as named "*Jahveh*," the Supreme Being of Israel received sacrifices. In this he differs, not only from the All Fathers in Australia, but from almost all of the countless supreme beings (or superior beings) whom we find in the background of the religions of polytheistic and animistic peoples, Melanesian, African, American, unchristianised Finns, and so on. Among these peoples such beings—the Finnish Ukko, the African Nzambe, the Red Indian Atahocan, the Melanesian Harisu, or Konori, or Manseran Nangi—stand apart; they receive no gifts. This is the most common feature of these beings in the religions of peoples who sacrifice to minor gods and spirits. Here Jahveh differs from

them, and it may be suggested that, in his case, sacrifice was a relatively late and borrowed addition to his cult, for among Australians the All Father receives no cult, and it is rare that among races who do sacrifice to minor gods and spirits the Supreme Being receives any gifts. But early Israel dwelt among peoples greatly given to sacrifice.

When Mr. Huxley wrote, the All Father of savage tribes had received little attention from students, and the supreme beings of Africa, America, Melanesia, and other places, had been studied but sketchily. Anthropology blinks them!

There is very little, if any, trace of offerings to the ghosts of the dead, in Israel. Mr. Huxley explains this by the care of late monotheistic editors, violently opposed to every kind of idolatry, who would cut out references to the gifts and sacrifices to the dead. But this argument does not hold water, for the monotheistic editors leave in, or even insert, constant oburgations of every form of false religion known to them. The Old Testament is full of such denunciations, and had the worship of ghosts prevailed it would have been condemned with all the other heterodoxies. We do hear of *teraphim*; but, if these were objects of ancestor-worship, they are usually not denounced. Hosea (iii. 4) regards *teraphim* as perfectly orthodox; "appurtenances of the suspended worship of Jahveh," says Mr. Huxley. If they were *that*, how were they appurtenances of dead men's ghosts? If that worship was orthodox, why should "late monotheistic editors" cut out references to it as heterodox, while they were denouncing all heterodoxies? They did not cut out such references.

Mr. Huxley, seeking light from Canon Farrar, quotes him to the effect that the priests tolerated *teraphim*, while they were denounced by the prophets. But Hosea is an eighth-century, and a very particular, prophet, and *he* never dreams of barring *teraphim*. "The researches

of the anthropologist lead him to conclusions identical in substance" with those of the Canon; but both the anthropologist and the divine seem utterly at sea!

If "late monotheistic editors are not likely" (because "violently opposed to all kinds of idolatry") "to have selected from the materials at their disposal any obvious reference to" feeding ghosts, and to ancestor-worship, why did they select endless evidence to other heterodox practices? And, if *teraphim* mean ancestor-worship, why did the editors leave in plenty of obvious evidence to ancestor-worship (which it was their alleged design to excise); while, if prophets denounced *teraphim*, why did the prophet Hosea enumerate them among "appurtenances of the suspended worship of Jehovah"? Much later Josiah abolished "the images" (2 Kings xxiii. 24). We do not know that they represented ancestral ghosts.

The truth is that, as far as our information goes, the Israelites, at the date of the books of Samuel and Judges, appear to have regarded the spirits of the dead as they were regarded by the contemporary Achæans of Homer's time. In Homer's opinion, man has a spirit which survives death, and abides in the meadow of asphodel, and the halls of Hades, among "the strengthless heads of the Dead." Homer never hints at offerings of food to the dead, nor at ancestor-worship, which, before and after his time, was a factor in Ægean and in classical Greek religion. The dead man, in Homer, receives all his dues when his body has been burned and his bones have been interred. After these rites he is powerless; he cannot even appear to the living. If he do not receive these rites, his spirit may, in some fashion not explained, be "a cause of wrath" to the living. The Hebrew ghosts were as impotent in Sheol as those of Achilles and Agamemnon in Hades. There was nothing to be gained by feeding, nothing to be lost by neglecting to feed them.

After discussing the Hebrew ephod, the Ark, and other matters, Mr. Huxley announces that of the whole theological system of Israel, as defined by him, "the ghost theory is the foundation." As has been said, I do not believe that the ghost theory had anything to do with the origin of the Hebrew All Father, Jahveh, any more than the ghost theory accounts for the origin of the Australian All Fathers, Baiame, Mulkari, and the rest. Here I differ from Mr. Huxley and his predecessors and contemporaries, Bossuet, J. G. Müller, Mr. Tylor, and Mr. Herbert Spencer. Here is my heresy! The belief in a non-spiritual supreme All Father certainly exists in many Australian tribes, while neither the tribes who have nor those who lack it feed the ghosts of their dead, unless there be a trace of the practice here and there—for example, among the Dieri.

Mr. Huxley discusses, at length, a Tongan god, Tá-li-y-Tooboo, whose name is translated "Wait There, Tooboo." His domain extends "from the top of the sky to the bottom of the earth." "It is curious to note," says Mr. Huxley, "that many Hebrew philologists have thought the meaning of Jahveh to be best expressed by the word 'eternal';" and he thinks that Tá-li-y-Tooboo expresses the sense of Eternal as well as the Tongan speech is capable of conveying such an abstract conception. But eternity cannot be predicated of a dead man's ghost. This God had no priest, and was not fed—not even a libation was poured out before him.

As to Australia, Mr. Huxley writes that the whole theology of the tribes "is a mere belief in the existence, powers, and disposition (usually malignant) of ghostlike entities who may be propitiated or scared away; but no cult can properly be said to exist. And, in this stage, theology is wholly independent of ethics." Even the authorities accessible to Mr. Huxley—for example, the great work of Waitz—disproved these statements; and since the publication of

Mr. Howitt's and Mrs. Langloh Parker's books¹ nobody can repeat such assertions. On the other hand, Mr. Huxley admits that "there are very few peoples without additional gods, who cannot, with certainty, be accounted for as deified ancestors."

Mr. Huxley ends with the conclusion "that, like the rest of the world, the Israelites had passed through a period of mere ghost-worship, and had advanced through ancestor-worship, and fetishism, and totemism, to the theological level at which we find them in the books of Judges and of Samuel." From this movement the belief in the All Father is omitted, no doubt because Mr. Huxley had not studied that element in the evolution of religion. Yet it had been studied long before he wrote.

To give an adequate account of Mr. Howitt's observations on the Australian All Fathers, one ought to cite textually his whole chapter on the subject, twenty pages in his *Native Tribes of South East Australia*. One ought also to quote textually his earlier writings on the topic,² and compare and criticise the whole. But it must suffice to present, textually, Mr. Howitt's conclusion as set forth in his great work of 1904. It is to be understood that the *Jeracil* of which he speaks is, or rather was, the ceremony at which the boys of the Kurnai tribe in Gippsland were initiated into the tribal secrets, including the attributes of the All Father, Mungan-ngaua.

Mr. Howitt had long ago received his information from men who had been initiated before 1844, "when Gippsland was settled by the whites." The ideas communicated to them in the ceremony before 1844 could not be the result of missionary teaching, for the missions, as far as Mr. Howitt remembers, were not established till about 1860. Mr. Howitt induced the Kurnai to hold a

¹ *Native Tribes of South East Australia*, and *The Euahlayi Tribe*.

² *Journal of Anthropological Institute*, 1884, 1885.

Jeraeil, and, from this point, I quote him word for word :—

When the *Jeraeil* was held at my instance, these men conducted them, and they assured me that they did so exactly as "the old men" had done when they themselves were initiated. In answer to inquiries about the legends told at the ceremonies, including that of Mungan-ngaua and his son Tundun, they said, "The old men told us so."

As to the possibility of this belief having been introduced by blacks from the settled districts of New South Wales and Victoria, it will suffice to say that the Kurnai were isolated from other tribes by the nature of the country surrounding them. Moreover, they did not attend the ceremonies of any other tribe, nor did they receive visitors at theirs.

As to the tribes which have ceremonies of the western type, I must now point out that missions have been in existence in the Narrang-ga, the Parnkalla, the Dieri, and the Arunta tribes for long periods. In all of them, with perhaps the exception of the Narrang-ga, the missionaries have taught and preached in the native language, and, as to the Arunta, have, I believe, evolved a name for the Deity from the term which Spencer and Gillen have given as Alcheringa, or the Alcheringa ancestors. Such being the case, how is it, if we are to assume that the All-Father belief in the south-east has been due to missionary teachings, that there has not been a similar adoption of it by the western tribes?

If I am correct in saying that the Kurnai belief in Mungan-ngaua is aboriginal, then the similar beliefs of the other coast tribes may also be accepted.

It seems to be usually assumed from the evidences, for instance, of tribes like those of Fiji, that ancestor-worship has been at the root of primitive religions; *but Australian evidence seems to carry us back to a stage before ancestors came to be worshipped*,^{*} although they were looked upon as having been greater and wiser than their descendants, the present race. This is very evident from the account given by Spencer and Gillen of the Arunta and other tribes having kindred beliefs. I find that among the Lake Eyre tribes it was not the ancestors, but

a supernatural human race, antecedent to them, who are seen in myth and tradition to have been similarly superior to their successors. Here there is even less of a possible approach to ancestor-worship than with the Arunta.

In the tribes of South-East Australia the ancestors appear in the guise of totems or theriomorphic human beings, in some respects resembling both the Alcheringa ancestors and the *Mura-muras*. But it must be remembered that in these tribes there has been a clearly-marked advance in the status of society, from group-marriage to a form of individual marriage, from descent in the female to the male line, and from a society organised on the class system to one based on locality. Here, as I have now shown, the tribe living on the earth is represented by the tribe of the dead, living in the sky-country, but also able to visit the earth, and with a headman who is spoken of as "father" by the natives from the Murray mouth, in South Australia, to the Herbert River, in north-eastern Queensland.

In this being, although supernatural, there is no trace of a divine nature. All that can be said of him is that he is imagined as the ideal of those qualities which are, according to their standard, virtues worthy of being imitated. Such would be the man who is skilful in the use of weapons of offence and defence, all-powerful in magic, but generous and liberal to his people, who does no injury or violence to anyone, yet treats with severity any breaches of custom or morality. Such is, according to my knowledge of the Australian tribes, their ideal of headman; and naturally it is that of the Biamban, the master in the sky-country. Such a being, from *Bunjil* to *Baiaame*, is *Mami-ngata*—that is, "our father"; in other words, the All-Father of the tribes.

The mental stages by which the conception of the All-Father of the tribe may have been reached in these tribes perhaps commenced with the belief in the existence of the human self-consciousness as a spirit or a ghost, whose home on the earth and in the sky-country was dreamland. This would naturally lead to the belief in the existence of the ancestral ghosts as a tribe like that on the earth, with a headman and medicine-men, its fighting, feasting,

* My italics.—A. L.

and dancing. From this it is not a long stretch to the idea of the All-Father of the tribe, since it is not uncommon—indeed, I may go so far as to say that it is, in my experience, common—to address the elder men as father. Such seems to me the probable course of development of this belief, which, moreover, I am satisfied has been locally evolved, and not introduced from without. But in saying this I must guard myself from being thought to imply any primitive revelation of a monotheistic character. What I see is merely the action of elementary thought reaching conclusions such as all savages are capable of, and which may have been at the root of monotheistic beliefs.

But all this does not bring us to the worship of the ancestor.

Although it cannot be alleged that these aborigines have, consciously, any form of religion, it may be said that their beliefs are such that, under favourable conditions, they might have developed into an actual religion, based on the worship of *Mungan-ngaua* or *Baiame*.

There is not any worship of Daramulun, but the dances round the figure of clay and the invoking of his name by the medicine-men certainly might have led up to it.

If such a change as a recognised religion had ever become possible, I feel that it would have been brought about by those men who are the depositaries of the tribal beliefs, and by whom, in the past, as I think, all the advances in the organisation of their society have been effected. If such a momentous change to the practice of religion had ever occurred, those men would have readily passed from being medicine-men to the office of priests.

The important things to note in this long quotation are: (1) That in Mr. Howitt's opinion "the Kurnai belief in *Mungan-ngaua* is aboriginal," and that, "if so, the similar beliefs of the other coast tribes may also be accepted" (as aboriginal). Once more, if all this be correct, the similar beliefs of the tribes *remote from the coast*, as in the north of New South Wales, may (in my opinion) also be regarded as aboriginal, and not borrowed from the whites.

(2) Mr. Howitt thinks that Australian

evidence seems "to carry us back to a stage before ancestors came to be worshipped."

(3) "It must be remembered that" (in the tribes of South-East Australia) "there has been a clearly marked advance in the status of society, from group marriage to a form of individual marriage, from descent in the female to the male line, and from a society organised on the class system to one based on locality."

Mr. Howitt appears to intend us to understand that the South-Eastern tribes have advanced to the All-Father belief *pari passu* with an advance to a higher social organisation. But he himself shows that many of the South-Eastern tribes, with an All Father, do not reckon descent in the female line, and live in "a society organised on the class system, and not based on locality."¹ He does not mean (as he might readily be supposed to mean) to deny these facts in the passage quoted.

On the other hand (save among the Dieri and Urabunna tribes near Lake Eyre, and their congeners), the South-East tribes, with an All Father, like the central and northern tribes without an All Father, have "a form of individual marriage." The only tribes who have what Mr. Howitt calls "group marriage" are the Dieri and Urabunna, as aforesaid. Their "group marriage" is a legalised system like that which Sir George Mackenzie, about 1678, attributes to the tinkers in Scotland. In punishing adultery among them, says Sir George, some lenity is extended by Scottish law, "and some respect was likewise had here to that absurd custom among tinkers of living promiscuously and using one another's wives as concubines."²

The Dieri and Urabunna "use each other's wives as concubines" (*pirrauru*). The custom is legalised, and, at least in

¹ *Native Tribes of South East Australia*, pp. 97-105.

² Mackenzie, *Works*, vol. ii., p. 120; 1722.

great meetings, is preceded by a ceremony. Mr. Howitt calls this "absurd custom" "group marriage," and, as the Dieri and Urabunna have, in his opinion, no All Father, holds (as I understand) that the All Father, among other tribes, is a belief accompanying social advance to "individual marriage."

But others think that *pirrauru* is merely "an absurd custom," as among the tinkers. Moreover, the Arunta, with individual marriage, have (in one region) no All Father, nor have other tribes with male reckoning of descent, while tribes with female descent have an All Father. The belief, therefore, is not a concomitant of progress in social organisation.

(4) Mr. Howitt says that "in this being" (the All Father), "although supernatural, there is no trace of the divine." He thinks the faith may have "perhaps commenced with the belief in the existence of the human self-consciousness as a spirit or ghost." There would be a tribe of such ghosts in the skyland; they would have a Headman; "from this it is not a long stretch to the idea of the All Father of the tribe."

Against this suggestion we must place the fact that the All Father is not envisaged as spiritual. Mr. Howitt, indeed, mentions an old man of the Yuin tribe, who said that the All Father, Tharamulun, died on earth, and that his spirit went to the sky, whence he can see people and is angry when they do what they ought not to do, especially when they eat forbidden food. Here we have the All Father spiritualised, but Mr. Howitt adds that "the usual statement is that he" (the All Father, or Tharamulun in this case) "went up in the flesh, as one of the *Gommeras*, or medicine-men, might do." Mr. Howitt also remarks, elsewhere, on the usual mistake of speaking about the All Father as "great spirit, or good spirit." He says: "I must confess that I have also committed this misleading error

before I really perceived the true facts of the case." The All Father is not envisaged as spiritual, and so cannot be the ghostly Headman of a tribe of ancestral ghosts, which I take, under correction, to be Mr. Howitt's theory of the origin of the All Father on his next page but four (pp. 503-7).

The All Father is not conceived of as a spirit, but as an anthropomorphic being, of unknown origin, sometimes self-created, and deathless. Hence it follows that he is not the ghost Headman of a tribe of ghosts. No ghost "is said to have made all things on the earth," like Narrundere² and Baiame.³ "Bunjil was the maker of the earth, trees, and men."⁴ No ghost of a man made earth, trees, and men! For these reasons, the facts being taken from Mr. Howitt's own collections, we cannot regard the All Father as an idealised ghost.

Mr. Howitt concludes thus (I quote as much of the passage as seems essential, and refer the reader to the page): "What I see is merely the action of elementary thought, reaching conclusions such as all savages are capable of, and which may have been at the root of monotheistic beliefs." He says that there is "no worship of the All Father," but that there are dances round the figure of clay representing Daramulun, and invocations of his name. Yet the natives "have not consciously any form of religion."⁵

My own view is expressed in an earlier statement by Mr. Howitt, a statement of 1884:

There is clearly a belief in a Great Spirit, or rather an anthropomorphic Supernatural Being, the "Master" of all, whose abode is above the sky, and to whom are attributed powers of omnipotence and omnipresence, or, at any rate,

¹ Howitt, *N. T. S. E. A.*, p. 503.

² Taplin, *The Narrinyeri*, p. 55. Howitt, *N. T. S. E. A.*, p. 488.

³ Mr. Cyrus Doyle, quoted in Howitt, p. 494. Cf. also Ridley, *The Kamilaroi*, p. 135.

⁴ *Letters from Victorian Pioneers*, p. 84, in Howitt, p. 492.

⁵ Howitt, *N. T. S. E. A.*, pp. 507, 508.

¹ Howitt, *N. T. S. E. A.*, p. 495.

the power "to go anywhere and to do anything." The exhibition of his image to the novices, and the magic dances round it, approach very near to idol worship. The wizards who profess to communicate with him, and to be the mediums of communication between him and his tribe, are not far removed from an organised priesthood. To his direct ordinance are attributed the social and moral laws of the community. Although there is no worship of Daramulun, as, for instance, by prayer, yet there is clearly an invocation of him by name, and a belief that certain acts please while others displease him.

It has been said that the Australian savage is without any form of religion or religious beliefs. If religion is defined as being the formal worship of a divinity, then these savages have no religion; but I venture to assert that it can no longer be maintained that they have no belief which can be called religious—that is, in the sense of beliefs which govern tribal and individual morality under a supernatural sanction.¹

In this earlier passage Mr. Howitt states my own view, which in 1884 was his, of South Eastern Australian religion. In his work of 1904, as in 1884, he speaks of the reverence with which the All Father was regarded. "The Wiimbaio speak of Nurelli with the greatest reverence. He is said to have made the whole country, with the rivers, trees, and animals."² In 1884 Mr. Howitt said:—

The name of Tharamulun is to them so sacred that even when speaking to me of it, when no one else was present but ourselves, the old men have done so in almost whispers, and have used elliptical expressions such as "he," "the man," or "the name I told you of." This I have found exactly paralleled by the reluctance of my Woi-worung informant to mention the name of Bunjil when speaking of his supernatural powers, although he did not show so much reluctance when repeating to me the "folklore" in which "the Great Spirit" of the Kulin plays his part.³

Though this passage does not occur (unless I have overlooked it) in Mr. Howitt's book of 1904, still it is an early record of facts observed by him. The reticence of the natives indicates fear (as when they fear to name a dead man, lest he hear and harm them), but it also indicates reverence, and, in the last case given, shows that a difference is taken between the "folklore" and the more religious beliefs about the being.

The belief in a being, commonly known as "our father," who is deathless, who existed before death, according to the myths, who came into the world, or who made it, who made things; who gave commandments, moral, ritual, and social; who keeps his eyes on human conduct; who, in some cases, rewards and punishes good men and evil in a future life; who "can go anywhere and do anything," whose figure is represented and whose name is invoked at the dances executed in his honour, does not now come within Mr. Howitt's definition of "religion," apparently. I do not know that he has formulated his definition, unless it be that prayer and cult, in addition to belief, constitute religion; but this Australian belief I cannot but regard as religious. If the belief is the result of "elementary thought, reaching conclusions such as all savages are capable of," *tant mieux pour Messieurs les sauvages!* Their competence to frame this belief is, however, constantly denied.

We see that these very backward savages are not what Mr. Huxley supposed them to be, and that "animism," or ghost-worship, is not the basis of their religion (if I may use the word), for, in fact, they do not worship ghosts.⁴

¹ The reader will find much about the All Father form of belief in the later editions of my *Myth, Ritual, and Religion* (see especially the Introduction to the second edition), and in my *Magic and Religion*. More recent evidence, with that used by myself, may be read in *La Notion de l'Être Suprême chez les Sauvages*, by M. René Hoffmann. (Romet, 26, Boulevard Georges-Favou, Geneva, 1907.) The New Series of the *Journal of the Anthropological*

¹ *Journal Anthropological Institute*, 1884, pp. 458, 459.

² Howitt, *N. T. S. E. A.*, p. 489; 1904.

³ *J. A. I.*, p. 193; 1884.

The All Father of the Australian South-Eastern and other tribes, and the Puluga of the Mincopies of the Andaman Islands, present us with a being certainly not unlike the Jahveh of early Israel, and certainly not evolved by the process of raising an ancestral ghost to a very high power. That opinion can no longer be logically maintained. Nor, in face of the facts, can we agree, generally speaking, with Sir Alfred Lyall's theory that "The foundation of natural religion.....is the principle of *Do ut des*" ("I give that you may give"), "and the most ingenious researches into the evolution of primitive ideas will hardly take us beyond or behind it."¹

Researches have done the thing. To the chief being, in the belief of many tribes, nothing at all is given, except obedience to his commands, and such praise as may be inferred from the dances and invocations. To the supreme being of many polytheistic tribes—a being whom I take to be a survival of the All Father—nothing is given, as a general rule; he is addressed, by the Masai, in brief pious ejaculations,² as is Nzame among the Fans.³ The Ehwe, or Ewe, supreme being, Mawu, is also appealed to in brief ejaculations, in moments of danger; but he receives no sacrifice. Once a year a she-goat is tethered up in his honour, and dies if it cannot nibble through the rope.⁴

Sacrifice to the supreme being of the polytheistic barbaric races is, in short, very rare. It is to the minor deities, probably evolved out of ghosts, and to ghosts themselves, that sacrifice is done; and among the most backward peoples, who possess an All Father, ghosts receive no sacrifice. They have not yet entered

Institute contains plenty of fresh evidence at first hand. The topic is received in more friendly fashion by German than by English anthropologists.

¹ *Asiatic Studies*, II., p. 172.

² Holler, *The Masai*, p. 346.

³ Allégret, *Les Idées Religieuses des Fan*, p. 10; Leroux, Paris, 1904.

⁴ Spieth, *Die Ewe-Stämme*; Reimer, Berlin, 1906.

on the religious plane, and among these races the giftless All Father rules—and receives nothing. He was not invented in accordance with the principle, "I give that you may give." He is asked for nothing, except, among the Euahlayi, for rain, and for compassion to the souls of the dead. This is the evidence of Mrs. Langloh Parker; but the case is isolated. The holding up towards heaven of a slain kangaroo, or other game, by the Narrinyeri, whose All Father is Nurundere, is the nearest approach among the Australians to sacrifice, or, perhaps, expression of gratitude.¹ Puluga, the creative being and moral judge of the Mincopies of the Andaman Islands, receives no sacrifice.²

Clearly, the theory of *Do ut des* as "the foundation of natural religion" is confuted by the facts, which were too long overlooked, though on record; they are constantly being corroborated by fresh observations and new instances. Efforts have been made to explain these giftless supreme or superior beings as the result of contact between the peoples who believe in them and European missionaries and explorers or settlers. An interesting essay in that direction is Mr. Tylor's "Limits of Savage Religion."³

On comparing Mr. Tylor's edition of *Primitive Culture* of 1871 with that of 1892, we see that most of the few changes which could be made in stereotyped plates are changes suggesting that savages have borrowed the higher attributes of their chief gods from Europeans. The essay of 1892 urges that point.

There are two insuperable *prima facie* objections. First, if savages recognised that the Christian God has great *mana*, they would pray to him, as the missionaries pray to their God, or would propitiate him as polytheists propitiate spirits and lower gods, by gifts. But they offer no gifts to their All Fathers, are known

¹ Taplin, *The Narrinyeri*, p. 55.

² Man, in *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, vols. xi. and xii., 1882, 1883.

³ *J. A. I.*, vol. xxi., 1892.

to pray only in one ascertained case; and, among polytheists, though they use brief ejaculatory prayers among the Masai and Ewe races, they very seldom offer sacrifices to their highest being. Their attitude to him is, therefore, not the result of Christian influences. They have not even learned to take their gods' names in vain.

Secondly, among the Australians, the knowledge of the All Father, even of his name, is concealed from women, children, and, usually, from white men, except the few who have been initiated. Till he was informed by an initiate, Mr. Howitt knew nothing about the Kurnai belief in Mungan-ngaua; and he is persuaded that such beliefs are original, not borrowed from the whites. Forty years ago the eminent anthropologist Waitz was of the same opinion.

It is inconceivable that, if savages borrowed their highest religious conceptions from European teachers, their women and children should have been left in the dark by these evangelists. I have seen no reply to these two arguments against the theory that the better part of savage religious ideas have been derived, as a rule, from missionary teaching, though there exist distinct traces of "contamination" of native opinion here and there. But my view is distasteful to most anthropologists.

Thus Monsieur Mauss, reviewing Mr. Howitt's account of what he learned from the Kurnai, thinks that their All Father Mungan-ngaua (of whom Mr. Howitt knew nothing till he was informed by an initiate) was originally nothing but a personification of the bull-roarer, and that originally the initiate were told that Mungan-ngaua was "an imaginary, mythical figure," before the missionaries came. After the missionaries came (and when they came M. Mauss does not tell us), Mungan-ngaua was converted into the paternal and ethical being revealed to Mr. Howitt.¹ This theory of M. Mauss,

rejected by Mr. Howitt, as we have seen, ought to have been accompanied by an account of missionary work among the Kurnai prior to Mr. Howitt's information.

M. Mauss does not remark that Mr. Howitt received the facts from a man initiated before 1844, when the whites came into the Kurnai country; and long before 1860, when, as far as Mr. Howitt remembers, the missions were established. "In all subjects, religious or not religious," says Vinet, "the talent for seeing only what we want to see is one of the most terrible that the devil has imparted to mankind."² M. Mauss has also to explain why the Kurnai do not pray to Mungan-ngaua, and how it happens that their women and children do not know about the attributes of that being.

Sir A. B. Ellis, after advocating warmly the theory of borrowing, has abandoned it; and Miss Kingsley, with her intimate knowledge of African religion, rejects the theory of borrowing in general, with some exceptions. The African superior being "is not a memory of Jehovah."³

I have criticised Mr. Tylor's essay on borrowing ("Limits of Savage Religion") in minute detail.⁴ It is not possible here to go into the historical evidence.⁴ As I wrote in *Magic and Religion*, "I am nervous about differing from Mr. Tylor," and I printed a second study of his essay; but my conclusions are fortified by the opinions of Mr. Howitt, Sir A. B. Ellis, and Miss Kingsley, and by the fresh examination of old evidence by Mr. Thomas.

So far I have reached this point: as far as my reading and powers of reasoning have instructed me, many very back-

¹ *Etudes sur Pascal*, p. 94, 1904; in Hoffmann, *La Notion de l'Être Suprême chez les Sauvages*, p. 34.

² *Folk Lore*, vol. viii., 1897.

³ *Magic and Religion*, pp. 15-45, 295-97.

⁴ For the case of the Australian Baiame, as pre-missionary, see Mr. N. W. Thomas, in *Man*, 1905, No. 28.

⁵ *L'Année Sociologique*, vol. ix., p. 180.

ward tribes believe in an All Father, not animistic, not a ghost; not prayed to, not in receipt of sacrifice, but existent from the beginning, exempt from death, and (in his highest aspects) kindly, an ethical judge of men, and either a maker of men and most things, or a father of men and a maker of many things. He also, in some cases, is Lord of the Dead, and awards retribution.¹

I cannot but see in this faith of the most backward of known peoples "ideas which may have been at the root of monotheistic beliefs," to use the words of Mr. Howitt. These ideas, gradually purified, as Mr. Huxley points out, by the prophets, account, in the most obvious way, for the prophetic conception of Jahveh. A peculiarity of the religion of Israel was the concentration of sacrifices on Jahveh, and their absence (as far as our evidence goes) in Hebrew spirit-worship, which seems hardly to have left a certain trace. Mr. Huxley writes that "the essence of the change," "the great reformation" produced by the prophets, "is the reversal of the position which, in primitive society, ethics holds in relation to theology. Originally, that which men worship is a theological hypothesis, not a moral ideal. The prophets, in substance, if not always in form, preach the opposite doctrine."²

But we have shown that among certain Australian tribes, say the Euahlayi, Kurnai, and Wathi-Wathi, the All Father is the ethical ideal. The best moral ideas of the natives, including truthfulness and unselfishness, are in-

culcated at the rites as precepts of Baiame or Mungan-ngana, in company with other rules about the conduct of life, ritual, forbidden foods, and forbidden degrees in marriage.

Thus the teaching of the prophets was not so much "a reversal of" as a return to "the position which, in primitive society" (or in some "primitive" societies) "ethics holds in relation to theology." In the present state of Biblical criticism it is impossible to quote texts proving that Jahveh is always, as far as our evidence goes, an ethical being, because we may be told that the texts are late interpolations; and the proof that they are late is the fact that they are moral. "There is none holy as the Lord.....The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth," says the Song of Hannah (1 Samuel ii. 2-10). I suppose this may be called a post-Exilian interpolation; or, again, we are told by Mr. Huxley that perhaps Moses became acquainted with "the advanced ethical and legal code of Egypt, and with the more or less pantheistic unification of the Divine to which the speculations of the Egyptian thinkers, like those of all polytheistic philosophers, from Polynesia to Greece, tend; if, indeed, the theology of the period of the nineteenth dynasty was not, as some Egyptologists think, a modification of an earlier, more distinctly monotheistic doctrine of a long antecedent age."³

Other critics maintain that Israel was never in Egypt at all. If so, Moses did not pick the brains of the Egyptians. Nor did the dusky theologians of Australia and the Andaman Islands; while, if any man "lives up to" their best moral ideas, he will be an excellent citizen, or not a bad socialist, as you please to put it. On the other hand, if a man adopts many of the lower Australian practices; initiates his children by painful and dangerous rites; marries in the Arunta fashion; avenges the natural

¹ See *The Euahlayi Tribe*, and Mr. Cameron's account of Tha-Tha Puli, the All Father of the Wathi-Wathi. *J. A. I.*, pp. 344, 370; 1885. Mr. Cameron knew the blacks forty years ago. He closely cross-examined his informant, Makogo, and could not shake his evidence that the beliefs were held "before the settlement of the country by white men." "We would be better off," said Makogo, "if our beliefs had never been disturbed"; such is Mr. Cameron's version of his statement. There are plenty of other examples.

² *Science and Hebrew Tradition*, p. 361.

³ *Science and Hebrew Tradition*, pp. 359, 360.

deaths of his kinsfolk on perfectly innocent people, and so on, the police will interfere, and among other inconveniences he will find himself in the divorce court.

We have been tracing the All Father at his best with pronounced moral attributes. But in Australia there are tribes, notably the Arunta studied by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, who have no moral All Father—no All Father—and there are other tribes, such as the Arunta studied by Mr. Strehlow, and the Kaitish, who have an All Father concerned about the obedience of men to his ritual rules, but unconcerned, as far as our evidence goes, with human "ethics."

Thus the question arises, Is the earliest form of belief that in which there is no All Father, is the non-moral All Father the next stage, and are the ethical All Fathers the last link in the chain among the Australian tribes? Or is the ethical All Father the earliest, the non-ethical a decadence, and has the All Father become obsolete among the Arunta of Messrs. Spencer and Gillen? The view favoured by anthropologists generally is that religious conceptions advance with improvement in food and comfort, caused by rain, which is most copious in coastal regions. But we have seen that the theory does not work; if it did, such northern and north-eastern tribes as the Anula and Mara, and islanders in the Torres Straits, should have a highly developed All Father, whereas no All Father is reported among them; and the neighbours of the Arunta, with certain Arunta groups as remote as the other Arunta from the sea, should have no All Father, whereas they have Atnatu, Altjira, and Tukura.

While I cannot presume to dogmatise on the question of priority of development, it is necessary to remark that the Arunta, with their neighbours, the Ura-bunna, to the west, and many tribes between the centre and the north, possess a form of philosophy, and a mythical belief (it can hardly be called

a religious belief), which cannot easily co-exist with faith in an All Father.

As the philosophy and the myths are certainly the results of careful speculation, it is not at all impossible that, while they were being matured in human minds, the simpler belief in the All Father was destroyed (if it existed), and among some tribes was wholly forgotten, while in others it was partially obliterated.

That philosophic and scientific speculation may obliterate religious belief among civilised men is not questioned; and speculations, really scientific in tendency, may have similar effects among savages. The Dieri and Ura-bunna tribes, with those of the centre and north-east, whether they have an All Father (like Strehlow's Arunta, the Loritja, the Kaitish), or have none, possess a very elaborate animistic philosophy, a doctrine of spirits. Wherever the souls of the dead are much worshipped, there the idea of an All Father, or of a God, tends to be "crowded out" by the competition of accessible, friendly, human spirits or saints, not too high, not too remote. Among the All Fatherless Australians, and among those whose All Father is not ethical, the philosophy of spirits (nowhere absent) is raised to the highest power. There are differences in the systems of each tribe, but they have all features in common with the philosophy of the Arunta. According to them, in the *Alcheringa* (and they do not, like the Kaitish, look behind the *Alcheringa* and see Atnatu "making it"), a number of animate shapeless bulks lay about in a marine environment. These *Inapertwa*, though animate and gifted with specific potentialities and with indwelling spirits, took on no obvious differentiation of species till they were slit with flint knives by the two beings named *Ungambikula* ("self-existing," or "made out of nothing." The Arunta language is capable of conveying abstract conceptions!) The bulks then took animal forms, these of the various totems of the tribe, some two hundred in number.

Each was a kangaroo man, or a man kangaroo, a man iguana, or an iguana-man, and so with all the rest. Though merely animals in one aspect, in another these beings were human. Thus the Arunta explain to themselves why *they* are animals, by totem name, and why each man is in mystic *rapproch* with his own totem, an animal or other object. For each Arunta man, woman, and child is *not descended* from one of the primeval forms, but *is* that form, and *incarnates the spirit* which first tenanted that form. *The Arunta have no ancestors.* In their opinion, their spirit and life have been from the Alcheringa, the beginning, have existed ever since spirits tenanted the undifferentiated bulks on the salt sands.

Sexual connection cannot make such an everlasting spirit, and so the Arunta deny that babies are the result of sexual connection. The first beast-men, or men-beasts, had very potent magical power, and went about performing rites, and achieving monstrously tedious impossible adventures. They could pass along under ground, but the time came when each group went into the earth and died, as far as the body was concerned. Hills, trees, springs, and rocks arose to mark the spots, *Oknanikilla*, and the spirits of the group, each group being of one totem, haunt the spot. They especially haunt the stone amulets, adorned with concentric circles, spirals, cups, and volutes, which they used to carry (*Churinga Nanja*). When a spirit is tired of hanging about thus, he incarnates himself in any passing married woman. When the spirit is born again in the flesh he is not, save by accident, of his father's or mother's totem, but of the totem to which the ghosts belong who haunt the spot (*Oknanikilla*) at which his mother first became aware of his life within her.*

* The brief summary of Arunta philosophy here given is derived from the two works by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, on the *Central and North Central Tribes of Australia*. These authorities declare that, according to the Arunta

Such is the Arunta philosophy. The original groups had no chiefs, though one Alcheringa man might be more distinguished than another. At present each totemic group has an *Alatunja*—a kind of head man, or "Moderator"; the office is hereditary in the male line. But the philosophy does not need, and does not recognise, any All Father, any maker of things. All came by evolution, with a little supernormal assistance from the beings that were "self-existing" (*Ungambikula*). There can be neither All Father nor future life in another world, by the very nature of this philosophy. The Kaitish say that half of their tribe were developed by evolution; the other half are children of Atnatu.

legends, each group of Alcheringa folk, after many adventures, "went into the earth," died the death of the body, and left their spirits hovering about the spot and about their stone amulets. Rocks, trees, or other features in the landscape arose to mark these mortuary centres called *Oknanikilla*. In such a spot, when a child supposed to have been conceived there is born, his primeval stone amulet is sought for, and is said to be found. If it is not found, a wooden amulet, or *churinga*, is made for the child. I have ventured to suggest that these *Oknanikilla* may actually be old burying-places, and that the stone amulets found in them may have been laid on the ancient graves, like the marked banana-shaped stones found on the graves of the natives near the Darling River and elsewhere in South-Eastern Australia. Nothing can be ascertained except by carefully conducted excavations. In any case, according to our authorities, the Arunta whom they studied believed in the perpetual reincarnation of an original, primary stock of spirits, though the owners of these spirits *died*, as all subsequent owners do. Monsieur H. Van Gennep, however, a French critic who never saw an Arunta, maintains that, in Arunta opinion, the Alcheringa people went under the ground, *but did not die*. I think that Messrs. Spencer and Gillen ought to know best the nature of the opinions of the Arunta. Mr. Strehlow, a missionary among another set of Arunta, maintains, according to M. Van Gennep, that, in the theory of his flock, the mythic ancestors went into the ground, *but did not die there* (Van Gennep, *Man*, March, 1908, No. 18). The reader may study Strehlow's *Die Aranda und Luritja Stämme*, 1 (Baer, Frankfurt, 1907), and form his own opinion. The views of M. Van Gennep, as briefly stated in *Man*, are not intelligible by me:

The question arises, Did the Arunta evolve this relatively scientific theory of the origin of things from the first? Had they never the doctrine of the All Father? Or did they, like the members of the tribe whom Mr. Strehlow has studied, and whom Mr. Gillen has also described,¹ once possess the idea of the All Father above the sky, once possess an All Father?

This question cannot, at present, be answered with certainty. The Arunta, like the tribes with an All Father, use the wooden bull-roarer (*churinga irula*) to make its ghostly roar, and frighten away the women, when they initiate the boys arrived at puberty. Among tribes with an All Father a subordinate being, a deputy or son of Baiame, or Daramulun, or Mungan-ngaua, presides over the bull-roarer, and the women are told that he plays a part in the ceremonies. Among the Arunta there is a being corresponding to these deputies of the All Father. His name is Twanyirika. But, while his existence is asserted to the women and children, the initiated are told that he is purely mythical, which they are not to divulge.²

Are we to suppose that the Arunta, possessing, as a confessedly mythical bogey, a figure who corresponds to the usual deputy of the All Father, had once an All Father, who vanished when their evolutionary and animistic philosophy was developed? In deciding this point (unless we receive further information) I suppose that everyone will be influenced by his natural bias. Obviously, the question can be argued either way.

Thus, did the Kaitish originally believe only in the evolution of their species, and did they later invent Atnatu, who is the father of a large proportion

of their tribe? Or did they begin with father Atnatu, and later adopt evolution, only in part, from the Arunta philosophers? I point out that the Kaitish have certainly borrowed their form of totemism from that of the Arunta, who are unique in being able to marry women of their own totems. This they do freely; but the Kaitish, though they have the Arunta form of totemism, do not marry women of their own totems, or only do so by the rarest exception. The ancient universal prohibition, removed by law, abides in custom.

About the Dieri tribe, among whom the Mura Mura answer to the Arunta Alcheringa men, our information is vague. Mr. Howitt gives Bunjil and Daramulun as All Fathers, and denies that the Dieri have (as far as is known) any All Father. Yet he writes about a medicine-man announcing "a command received from some supernatural being, such as Kutchi of the Dieri, Bunjil of the Nurunjerri, or Daramulun of the Coast Murring."¹

If Daramulun and Bunjil be All Fathers, as is granted, and if Kutchi be on the same plane, then the Dieri have an All Father. But there is no trace of regard paid to him in the rites. A vague being, as far as we know, there is this interesting fact about him—that "Kutchi" is a term applied to anything strange and mysterious, like Elohim, *wakan*, and *orenda*, apparently. At least it means a ghost, and "is used by the Dieri for any of the strange paraphernalia (*sic*) of the whites, for even a dray and team of bullocks has been so called."² Kutchi is thus at once a being who, like Bunjil and Daramulun, inspires the medicine-men, and also a term for anything that is strange and "has *mana*." Like our own fairies, Kutchi makes dust whirlwinds, which cause "great consternation" in Dieri camps, and portend "great calamity."³

There has been much doubt concern-

¹ *The Horn Expedition*, vol. iv., p. 183. Nothing about this Alkira is mentioned in either of the works done in collaboration by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen. Mr. Gillen's earlier statements are not said to have been correct, or to have been erroneous.

² *Central Native Tribes*, p. 246, note. *Northern Tribes*, p. 497.

¹ Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 89.

² *Ibid.* p. 446.

³ *Ibid.*

ing the Dieri *Mura Mura*, reported by Mr. Gason (who knew the Dieri language) to be of the All Father type.¹ But Mr. Siebert, who was for long a missionary among the Dieri, finds the *Mura Mura* to be mere Alcheringa spirits that live apart, in the sky, and send rain, when influenced by the ceremonies of the Dieri "calling upon the rain-making Mura-Mura, calling out in loud voices the impoverished state of the country." They are supposed to inspire the men, *Kunkis*, whose veins are lanced in the ceremony. "The Mura-Mura is supposed to see this." The verb singular doubtless represents Mr. Gason's view of the case, not Mr. Howitt's.² Here we have a combination of invocation, or prayer, with symbolic ceremony. One Mura-Mura "perfected mankind," "went about making men everywhere."³

The Dieri have also a sky-dwelling being—Arawotya. "He at one time wandered over the earth," making deep water-springs. "After this he went up into the sky," like the All-Fathers.⁴

Meanwhile Mr. Strehlow, who worked among the Dieri and collaborated in a religious book for their students, avers that "it is a fact acquired for science that the Dieri know a deity of the heavens—Mura" (or, better, Murra, as Mr. Reuther, a missionary among them during fourteen years, attests). On this showing, Mura is the All Father; Mura-Mura are the pre-existing mythical race, as among the Loritja, neighbours of the Arunta, Tukura is the All Father; while the plural form of Tukura—Tukutita—answers to the mythical Mura-Mura of the Dieri.⁵

Mr. Siebert, who found no All Father, knew the Dieri language, no doubt, as certainly Mr. Gason (a police officer), Mr. Strehlow, and Mr. Reuther knew, or know, it. Yet they differ absolutely; and as the Dieri are now under mission-

aries, and are nearly extinct, we are unlikely to be better informed. As far as I can see, the Dieri had inklings of an All Father, germinal or decadent, and had religion enough to pray to the Mura-Mura, or Murra, as the case may be. This is almost unique in Australia. Among the tribes northward from the Arunta, and east-by-north to the Anula and Mara, on the coast, Messrs. Spencer and Gillen report no All Father, even in germ or in decadence. But travellers through sixteen tribes, each with a different language or dialect, cannot know everything about tribal beliefs.

On considering the whole evidence, it seems to me that while a doctrine of spirits and the practice of magic prevail everywhere, while nowhere are spirits worshipped (for the Dieri Mura-Mura are an oligarchy of legendary prehistoric beings), spirit-worship is not the origin of such religion as the Australians possess. Their speculations appear, in some tribes, to have taken the line of evolution and of animism, which stifled the belief in the All Father, if once men had it, or prevented it from arising, if they never had it. These tribes appear to me to be destitute of religion; for, though the disincarnate spirits of the Arunta may be present, invisibly, and pleased by their co-operative totemistic magic ceremonies, these are performed, not to please the spiritual spectators, but for practical purposes—the increase of the food supply. Among the tribes with an All Father, in favourable circumstances, prayer and worship might develop into a kind of monotheistic religion.

The tribes who, like the Dieri, have Mura-Mura, might develop them into a polytheism, like that of Greece, of the Northmen, or of the Maoris, though other elements, such as adoration of Sun, Earth, and Sky, go to make up polytheism. The early adventures, the *jeunesse orageuse*, of the Greek and Scandinavian and Vedic gods are much like those of the Mura-Mura.

The Kurnai not only have an All Father, Mungan-ngaua, but legendary

¹ Howitt, *J. A. I.*, vol. xxi., p. 797, 1883.

² Howitt, *N. T. S. E. A.*, pp. 394-96.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 780, 781.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 793, 794.

⁵ Strehlow, *Globus*, xii., 1907, No. 18, p. 287.

ancestral or pre-existing beings, *Muk-Kurnai*, half-human, half-bestial, like the Alcheringa folk, and both ideas are apparently myths explanatory of totemism. The *Muk-Kurnai* disported themselves "before men existed."¹

If ever, in Australia, men had taken to feeding and worshipping ghosts, then the All Father, as too remote and too high, would have tended to dwindle into a name, like the Atahocan of the Hurons, and the Unkulunkulu of the Zulus. Polytheism might have ensued, as in Africa, with a dim supreme being in the background.

Such is my present conception, roughly traced, of the origins and evolution of religion. Animism, though of enormous importance, as developing the idea of the soul, was not, apparently, the first, though, as far as sacrifice is concerned, the most potent, factor in religion. I have shown that, in my opinion, the doctrine of animism was not developed solely out of speculation on normal things such as shadows, breath, dreams, sleep, and death alone; but that experiences of a supra-normal nature, indicating the existence of human faculties as yet but imperfectly studied, also played their part.

On the whole, I am a rationalist about the rationalism of most of my masters and teachers, and deserve to be an outcast from the church anthropological of Mr. Tylor, Mr. Huxley, Mr. Herbert Spencer, Sir Alfred Lyall, and Mr. Grant Allen. But I have summarised the facts on which my opinion is based, and, for the rest, have gone where the *logos* led me. Many of the facts are of recent discovery: others are old, but have been insufficiently studied. Thus Dos Santos tells us that "the Caffres acknowledge no other gods than their monarch," meaning the Africans of Sofala or Quiteva. If we had many such instances, we might suppose that religion began in the worship of a living king, rich in *mana*. To be sure, that

form of religion could not arise save in a highly developed race with a king, or Mikado. No Australian worships a great medicine-man, though strong magic gives a man social influence, especially if accompanied by courage and sagacity. But, surely, when this passage of Dos Santos is quoted, we should also note (I have seen the circumstance ignored) that he goes on to say: "They acknowledge a God who, both in this world and the world to come, they fancy, measures out retribution for the good and evil done in this world.....Though convinced of the existence of a deity, they neither adore nor pray to him."² This being is Mulungu, known from Mozambique to Zanzibar.³ His name covers himself, and also all that is *wakan*, *mana*, *orenda*, in Dieri *Kutchi*, in old Hebrew *Elohim*. The misfortune is that students are apt to fix their eyes on the divinised king of Sofala, without observing that Dos Santos also mentions Molunga or Mulungu; and this form of "negative hallucination," of not seeing facts that make against our theory, or our bias, is very common in anthropological and historical research.

The reader would be very greatly deceived if he were left with the impression that the All Father has no attributes except the high attributes which we have examined. There is a whole *chronique scandaleuse* about these beings, just as there is about Zeus, Apollo, Demeter, Thor, Indra, or whatever god of the old civilisations you please. The All Father may be described, now as having Emu's feet, now with only one leg; his conduct in the folklore about him is frequently grotesque, or is in plain violation of his own moral precepts; he is not much better than Zeus in the Greek temple legends. This sad position the All Father shares with all the other deities of mythology.

How are we to account for this? In

¹ Dos Santos, in Pinkerton, vol. xvi., p. 687.

² For a bibliography of him see Hoffman, *op. cit.*, pp. 56, 57, and the notes.

³ Howitt, *N. T. S. E. A.*, p. 487.

the first place, the savage, like people who ought to know better, is very capable of "clowning" his own most serious conceptions, just as mediæval Catholicism was capable of grotesque buffooneries in churches, while mediæval stories of the saints, and of personages even more sacred, are familiar and farcical. This tendency is a fact in human nature.

Again, savage rites and dances are a kind of "mystery plays" and *ballets d'action*. Many of them have a magical purpose, and their original sense comes to be forgotten; but, as Baiame or Daramulun is credited with having initiated the plays and dances, it is usual to explain them as commemorative of some adventure of his; and that adventure may be grotesque or immoral. Any student of the Eleusinian rites will see that they were, in origin, magical rites to secure fertility. Such rites may be grotesque or immoral, but the Greeks regarded them as commemorating adventures of Demeter, Baubo, Zeus, or Dionysus, who were fabled to have

initiated the rites; and thus arose the unseemly myths about divine incests and buffooneries.

Once more, Greek myth knew, though Homer is silent, tales of amours of Zeus or Apollo in the shape of a dog, a bull, a swan, and so forth. Probably these arose out of totemism. A kin or tribe had once been fabled to descend from its totem. But all men, and, later, all kings, were children of Zeus. It was at last explained that the totem—bull, dog, swan, or what not—was Zeus or Apollo disguised in that shape; thus Helen, the daughter of the Swan (in some myths), was the daughter of Zeus in the shape of a swan.

On these lines I would explain the growth of the absurd and unseemly myths, savage, Vedic, or classical.

See, against me, Mr. Sidney Hartland, *Folk Lore*, IX. (1898), pp. 294-311. I replied in *Folk Lore*, X., pp. 1-45, and in *Myth, Ritual, and Religion*, new edition, Vol. I., pp. xvii-xviii.

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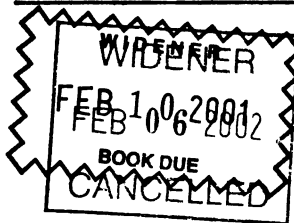
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